

THE
London Christian Instructor,

OR
CONGREGATIONAL MAGAZINE.

No. 22.]

OCTOBER, 1819.

VOL. II.

BIOGRAPHY.

Memoir of the Rev. Samuel Palmer, fifty years Pastor of the Independent Church at Hackney.

By whatever rule the comparative value of the different articles contained in our work, is, or ought to be estimated, its biography cannot occupy an inferior place in the judgment of our readers. In this leading department, we propose to rescue from the spoils of time numerous important and interesting facts in the lives of our most eminent ministers, and in the history of the families, academies, and churches, with which they were connected. In every age, men of more than ordinary endowments have risen above the level of their contemporaries, and, by their actions, or writings, or both, have not only commanded an extensive influence over the times in which they lived, and the classes of society to which they belonged, but even over succeeding ages and societies, far removed from the sphere of their personal labours. Among protestant dissenters, this honourable distinction will be cheerfully assigned to the subject of the present memoir; who, living among them from his birth to a good old age, did more in defence of their principles, and in support of their character and cause, than perhaps any other individual of either the past or the present age.

The Rev. Samuel Palmer was
CONG. MAG. NO. 22.

born, March the 26th, 1741, in the town of Bedford; a place celebrated among the friends of evangelical truth and religious liberty, as the residence of Bunyan, who, for preaching Christ and him crucified, was confined in its gaol nearly twenty years, through a spirit of intolerance, happily unknown among the present magistrates and inhabitants.

The only remarkable circumstance, relating to Mr. Palmer's early life, is recorded in his *memorabilia*, in the following terms:—"When I was about eight years of age, I very narrowly escaped being drowned in the river, at Bedford, being dropped by a man out of a boat, as he was going to take me to the other side to my father. I providentially caught hold of the side of the boat, and he took me in." Thus have many individuals, destined to honourable stations and useful labours in the church and the world, been rescued from death in their infancy or youth, that they, and those who afterwards enjoy the benefit of their talents and services, may be constrained to trace the hand of God in their daily preservation, and to adore him who, out of the most pitiable weakness, makes them "strong to do exploits." At this time, Mr. Palmer was making considerable progress in the attainment of general learning, at the Bedford Free School, whither he appears to have been sent, as a

day scholar at his father's expense, and not placed for gratuitous instruction upon the charitable establishment.

His father was a respectable tradesman, and, for several years, one of the aldermen of the corporation of Bedford. He professed the religion of the church of England, of which he was a devoted and zealous member; and for the credit and support of which, he was as tenacious, as his son afterwards became in favour of a loyal and peaceful separation from it. To such a length did he carry his prejudice against dissenting places of worship, that he very rarely entered one, and was with difficulty persuaded once or twice to attend upon the ministry of his son, at the commencement of his labours in Bedford, and when he was numerously followed, and highly popular. This strong partiality for the national church was not, however, accompanied by the least tyranny over the consciences of others, nor productive of the least obstruction to those most nearly related to him. Mrs. Palmer, who was a faithful and pious member of the dissenting church at Bedford, was not only suffered freely and constantly to resort with her children to the meeting, but allowed to educate them in her own principles, and to adopt whatever means she chose, to make them acquainted with the grounds of non-conformity, as well as the more important truths and duties of the gospel. The success of her efforts soon became apparent, in the enlightened and decided choice which her son and daughter made of her people to be theirs. Mr. Samuel Palmer, with his sister Anna, entered into communion with the church at Bedford, of which the Rev. S. Sanderson was then the faithful and beloved pastor; August the 4th, 1757.

On that occasion, Mr. Palmer gave in a written account of himself, which afforded every member of the church the utmost satisfaction. It mentions his having been the subject of religious impressions, and of a deep sense of the importance of divine things, at a very early period, which he attributes to the blessing of God attending the catechetical instruction he received from his pious mother. The Rev. Samuel Hilliard, the present highly esteemed pastor of the church, who has the account in his possession, observes, that "the writer of it discovers considerable acquaintance with his own heart, a deep sense of its depravity, and a great fear of being deceived by it;"—that he also "manifests an entire renunciation of himself in point of acceptance with God, to trust alone in the merits of the Redeemer;" and, that he concludes by saying: "if there is any good thing in me towards the Lord, not to me, but to his name be all the praise."

At the period of Mr. Palmer's union with the church at Bedford, he had been a student in the Academy, at Daventry, about twelve or thirteen months. Hence it appears, that the course adopted, in the introduction of promising young men to the ministry among the regular dissenters, was materially different at that time from what it is at present. Those who are now received into our Academies, have generally reached their nineteenth or twentieth year; and some have passed a few years beyond. They are either taken from among the members of churches, or admitted as members at the time of entering the Academy; and, in most cases, they have previously been called, by the churches to which they respectively belong, to ministerial work, after undergoing such examination as those

churches deem necessary to warrant so important a proceeding. But, if we may take Mr. Palmer's case as an example of the rule by which academies acted in his youth, it will appear that a method then prevailed exactly the reverse of the present. He was first admitted into the Academy, and placed among the students preparing expressly for the ministerial and pastoral office:—about a year after, he was admitted into the church to which his mother belonged, and in which he had been dedicated by baptism to God; and towards the close of his preparatory studies, five years after his admission, “he preached before the church and congregation, as he had done one whole Lord's day before, and being approved by the church, he was solemnly recommended by them in their prayers to the grace of God, for the work whereunto he appeared to be called.”* The late venerable and excellent Mr. Bull, of Newport Pagnell, and the Rev. William Wells, a highly esteemed pastor in the State of Vermont, North America, were called to the ministry by the same church, within a very few years of Mr. Palmer. Mr. Wells, the only survivor of the three, after twenty-five years' residence and usefulness in America, came to England about a year ago, and is now returned or returning, in a good old age, to the numerous and affectionate people of his transatlantic charge.

Mr. Palmer's studies in the Academy, which commenced when he was only fifteen years of age, were under the able direction of Doctor Caleb Ashworth, who, upon the death of the excellent Doddridge, in the year 1752, became the tutor of that

institution, and removed the pupils from Northampton to Daventry, the residence of his pastoral charge. During the first year of Mr. Palmer's academical course, Dr. Ashworth was assisted, as Dr. Doddridge had been before him, by the Rev. Samuel Clarke, eldest son of Dr. Samuel Clarke, of St. Alban's, with whose name and character, all who have read Doddridge's “Meditations on the Tears of Jesus,” the title of his funeral sermon, must be familiar. The high opinion which Mr. Palmer entertained of Dr. Ashworth, as a pastor and a tutor, is sufficiently manifest in the sermon which he preached and printed on his death: and of Mr. Clarke he observes, in a note to one of Orton's letters; “The editor well recollects the great veneration and respect with which he was treated both by his colleague and all the students.”

Of Mr. Palmer's diligence while he continued in the Academy, the testimony of his tutors and fellow-students, his proficiency in classical attainments, and some useful works which he composed and left in manuscript, afford abundant and gratifying proof. Among his numerous papers, the writer of this article has discovered two productions which manifest ability, industry, and piety, not often found in so young a man; and, where they are found, not often exercised to such useful purposes, amidst the engagements and pursuits of a college life. The first of these productions, and the first work that the author ever composed, is entitled, “A Letter to a Church Member, on his frequently absenting himself from the Lord's Table; wherein are answered most of the objections such an one can be supposed to make against a regular and constant attendance.” It is carefully written in short hand, fills forty

* Extracted from the church-book, and communicated by the Rev. Samuel Hillyard.

pages of the small duodecimo size, contains many valuable admonitory hints, and were it anonymously published, after strengthening a few puerilities of style, would be attributed to some author of matured piety and judgment, and be deemed worthy of general perusal and recommendation. The second work is entitled, "An Index to the Bible," upon a novel and useful plan, placing the various topics of sacred writ alphabetically, and arranging the letters of the alphabet on the right hand margin of the book, after the manner of an index used by commercial men, for the purpose of easily referring to the names of their customers, and the contents of their ledgers.

So far as Mr. Palmer could be said, at that early period, to have espoused any particular system of religious doctrine, he entered the Academy a strict Calvinist, entertaining the sentiments of Mr. Sanderson, whose private instructions as well as public ministry he had enjoyed from his youth, and from which he had evidently derived great spiritual advantage. But, after some months' residence at Daventry, he began not only to complain of a cold and dead frame of mind in public worship, and of the want of that profit by the ministry of the word, which he had received at Bedford, but to feel some hesitation and scruple on certain points of doctrine, which his pastor had been accustomed to teach as unquestionable truth. With the characteristic honesty and frankness which distinguished him through life, he lost no time in modestly laying his complaints and doubts before Mr. Sanderson, and requesting his advice; and, with true ministerial fidelity and zeal, the latter proceeded to encourage the drooping spirit, and settle the wavering faith of his inexperienced and inquiring

friend. "I am sorry," he observes, "that you have any cause to complain of coldness and deadness now; but consider, for your comfort, that such complaints rather argue the truth of grace than the want of it, and are what have been often found among christians. As to your not profiting so much now by the ministry of the word, as when at Bedford, you must remember the best of ministers are but men; that they can be nothing to us but what it pleases God to make them; and, therefore, that, as it is your indispensable duty to pray for those you now sit under, you have ground to hope you will be edified by them; especially as you have so much reason to believe, that they have obtained mercy from the Lord to be faithful." In a subsequent letter, he observes: "I see the unhappy situation you are in, and much pity you on this account; but hope that your faith, though it may be staggered, will not be overthrown. The limits of a letter, such as I usually write, will not admit of a particular description of those important points you mention in yours; but I flatter myself that, when I have your company here, I shall be able to convince you that the doctrinal sentiments you have embraced are neither unreasonable nor unscriptural; and consequently you have no cause to be ashamed of them."

The letters from which these extracts are taken, with several others in possession of the writer of this memoir, are highly valuable, not only for the true ministerial spirit which they breathe, but for the important hints on christian doctrine, experience, and practice, which they contain. One of the longest is filled with remarks in defence of "the imputation of Adam's sin to all his posterity," from which

it appears, that this was the first doctrine, among those which Mr. Palmer had been taught at Bedford, upon which he began to entertain doubts at Daventry. Whether his scruples upon this, and some few other difficult points of the calvinistic scheme, were entirely removed by his pastor's faithful and friendly efforts, we are not informed; but it is clear, that those efforts were the means of restraining the early aberrations of Mr. Palmer's mind, and that Mr. Sanderson was satisfied he had not written in vain. In a letter, dated about six months after the one above-mentioned, he says:—"That it has been in my power to do you any real service, gives me much satisfaction; and if any thing can add to it, it is the warm gratitude you express on this account: especially since I am naturally led to conclude, that if the kindness of the creature, a poor instrument, does so affect you, you must be far more impressed with a sense of the goodness of him whom you are taught to regard as the prime and principal agent."

Mr. Palmer's first sermon in public was preached in a barn, at Oakley, a village about three miles from Bedford: and his first sermon before a regular congregation, was delivered from the pulpit of his beloved pastor, to the people with whom he was united in christian fellowship, and to numbers of his townsmen who crowded to hear him. This introduction to a series of unrewarded public labours, extended through more than half a century, was on a subject peculiarly appropriate,—"the glorious gospel;"—on which he had carefully written two sermons, and to which he confined the eager attention of his hearers in both the services of that memorable sabbath. The next two sabbaths were spent at St. Neots, where he

preached three times on each day: after which we find him supplying at Bedford, Olney, Wellingborough, Northampton, Newport, and Shrewsbury, within the space of two months. At the latter place commenced his acquaintance with Job Orton, whose pulpit, during his illness, he was sent by Dr. Ashworth to supply, and with whom, from that period, he maintained an intimate and regular correspondence, part of which has appeared in print. Mr. Orton seems from the first to have set a high value upon the talents of his young friend, earnestly recommending him, from this early interview, and from the short trial which it gave him of his ministerial ability, to the vacant congregation at Cradley, in Worcester-shire. Whether he was not invited to this place, or refused the invitation, we are not informed; it does not, however, appear that he ever preached there; but, during the remainder of his term at Daventry, supplied, under his tutor's direction, different congregations within half a day's journey of that place;—Long Buckby enjoying the greater share of his early and acceptable labours.

On the 12th of June, 1762, he left the Academy with the following honourable testimony in the hand-writing of his tutor:—“These are to certify whom it may concern, that the Rev. Mr. Samuel Palmer has passed through a regular course of academical studies, in which he has behaved with great seriousness and diligence, and in every respect worthy a candidate for the sacred ministry: witness my hand, C. ASHWORTH.”

Some months before he left the Academy, he indulged a hope of settling in his native town, as assistant to his revered pastor; and he discovered his anxiety on

this point, together with his disinterested and devoted regard to Mr. Sanderson, by withholding replies to some valuable offers, till he knew his mind on the subject. In a most affectionate letter, Mr. Sanderson avowed his conviction, that Divine Providence did not appear to favour the design, and advised his young friend not to lose sight of any good opportunity of settling elsewhere, for the uncertain prospect of being chosen at Bedford. In the last month of his academical course, he received his first appointment to supply at Hackney, where he preached one whole sabbath, one sabbath afternoon, and one Thursday evening, with an effect which excited among his hearers a general wish that he might speedily renew his labours, and drew forth an immediate application from the members and subscribers, that he would preach among them for three months. Upon leaving the Academy he cheerfully undertook this probationary service, and in addition preached generally on one part of every Sabbath in London; his great acceptance at Hackney gaining him frequent applications for occasional services. His settlement at Hackney, as the regular assistant of Mr. Hunt, took place in October, 1762; and his ordination, as co-pastor, in November, 1764; Mr. Sanderson, Mr. Hunt, Dr. Savage, Dr. Langford, and other ministers, undertaking the different parts of that important service. His occasional labours at the Weigh-House meeting, London, having been received with great approbation, he was invited in January, 1765, to fill the office of morning preacher in that place; Dr. Langford, the pastor, requiring assistance, but continuing to perform the afternoon service. His time and attention were now fully occu-

pied, and he continued for eighteen months to discharge the duties of both these important stations with fidelity, acceptance, and success: but in the close of the following year, 1766, it pleased the wise Disposer of all events to lay aside Mr. Hunt from his public work, and thus to open the way for Mr. Palmer's admission to the office which he so long and so ably sustained as his successor. The age and infirmities of Dr. Langford rendered it extremely probable that his death would soon occasion a similar opening at the Weigh-House, and thus afford Mr. Palmer the opportunity of choosing either that place or Hackney for the scene of his future and entire labours: but, as Mr. Walter Wilson observes, "he wisely preferred the retreat of a country village to the bustle and caprice of the metropolis."

Having followed our revered friend from Bedford to Daventry, and thence to London and Hackney, and seen him honourably and comfortably fixed in the station from which death alone removed him in a good old age; it may be proper to notice his first appearance, about this period, as an author, in which character he afterwards ably distinguished himself, by numerous useful publications, especially in defence of *complete religious liberty*. Of the first work which he printed, he was only editor, which office, however, he performed in a manner highly creditable to his judgment; while in his choice of the work---Baxter's *Gildas Sallianus*---he evinced the serious spirit with which he had entered upon his pastoral duties. The first work which he published as an author, was a funeral sermon for his esteemed pastor, Mr. Sanderson, who died at the commencement of the year 1766. The request which Mr. Sanderson

particularly made on his dying bed, that his young friend should undertake that solemn and important service, sufficiently proves the estimation in which Mr. Palmer was held by those who had most narrowly watched his progress, and who were best able to form a just opinion of his rising character, and a rational expectation of his future celebrity and usefulness. The sermon is entitled, "The appearing of Christ the chief shepherd, considered and improved," from which our readers will know the words of the text. The request of the dying pastor, that Mr. Palmer should preach, was not more earnest than that of the people, that he would publish the sermon he had delivered. It is remarkable, that the only one who had expressed an objection to the discourse, was the great philanthropist, Howard, who thought the introduc-

tion reflected on some part of the auditory. This circumstance is mentioned in a letter written by Mr. Francis Sanderson to Mr. Palmer, and appears to have induced him to make some omission or alteration in the printed discourse, in order to meet Mr. Howard's wishes, since there is nothing in the introduction, or in any other part, to which that candid and intelligent man could afterwards object.

It was no small advantage for so young a minister to enjoy the affectionate and judicious counsel of such a friend as Howard; and whoever had the opportunity of hearing Mr. Palmer speak of that great and good man, must know that he held him in the very highest estimation, and entertained towards him feelings of the most filial and grateful veneration.

(*To be continued.*)

SHORT DISCOURSES FOR FAMILIES, &c.

No. XXII.

THE PARDON OF SIN.

"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy."

Micah vii. 18.

THE Deity presents himself to us under numerous and various aspects. We behold him as the God of nature, investing the skies with their beauty, and clothing the earth with its produce and luxuriance. He appears also as the God of providence, holding about our persons a mighty shield, and protecting us from innumerable accidents and dangers. But in vain do we know him in these relations, if we are strangers to him as the God of

grace and forgiveness. What is it to me that I am fed by his general bounty, or preserved for a season by his careful providence, if the guilt of my iniquities against him be retained, and if his righteous displeasure hangs over my head, like a destructive sword ready at any given moment to fall upon me, and to cut me in pieces! The prophet, therefore, invites our admiration of him, not merely as the God of nature or providence, but as the God of grace and mercy.

I. Notice, first, the source of forgiveness in the benignity and compassion of the Deity. "He delighteth in mercy." Fear paints the Deity as surrounded with terrors, and superstition invests him with every attribute but that of mercy. What are all the idol gods of the heathen, but forms of

terror and vengeance, vindictive in their fury, and delighting in the blood of their worshippers ! But the God whom we worship, has represented himself to be a being far different from the one whom our fears have conceived, or the dark imaginations of sinners have drawn. Enthroned in his own eternity, and foreseeing that the fall of our first parent would cut us off from the bliss for which we were created, he formed even then the noble and generous purpose of recovering us to himself, and of raising us to a bliss far higher than that from which we were to be so awfully thrust down. In the formation of this purpose, he was alone : no one suggested it to him : it sprung up in his own eternal mind, and was indulged by him with the greatest delight. To this was owing the appearance of Christ in our world. He came, not to render his Father willing to save us, for his coming was the fruit of that willingness, but to enable him to save us in a way honourable to *all* his perfections. Never till we arrive at this purpose, do we reach the source of our salvation : never till then do we perceive our infinite obligation to the Father of mercies. To this fountain of eternal love in the breast of the Deity, we owe the existence of every fond hope that swells our bosom, and every exhilarating prospect of future good that spreads itself before us : and, to look into that fountain at last, thus flowing with compassion and kindness for sinners before the foundation of the world,—this to the believer will be heaven.

II. Notice, secondly, the iniquity that is forgiven.

There is no guilt so small, as not to need being purged away by the sacrifice of Christ. It is a great mistake to represent the depravity of all men, as equal in degree : for there are some in whose constitution and circum-

stances it finds a far less richer soil than in others, and grows not to such a fearful luxuriance. But there are none in whom its influence and operations have not entailed that portion of guilt, which, unless they become personally interested by faith in the blood of Christ, will sink them lower than the grave. Give us the most amiable of human beings, one who has filled up in an interesting manner the various relations of life to which he has been called ; and we shall find within that very individual, so many conscious transgressions of the law of God in heart, lip, and life, as will leave him without excuse, and force him to confess, that unless the blood of atonement be sprinkled upon him, the destroying angel will never pass him by.

But while there is no guilt so small as not to need for its subject an interest in the atoning efficacy of the Saviour's blood ; there is, on the other hand, none so great as to go beyond the reach of its virtue. We sometimes meet with an individual, who seems to think that he cannot be wicked enough. He falls, yea, runs into every kind of evil. He spares the devil the trouble of tempting him, by tempting himself. His heart deviseth iniquity upon his bed, and his feet hasten to execute it. He laughs at the representation of future danger, as Leviathan at the shaking of a spear. As well might you expect the marble to yield beneath the pressure of your touch, as hope to move that heart by any warning you can give of danger, or hopes you can suggest of mercy. He looks up with complacency to a heaven which he imagines vacant, and forwards to the abhorred gulph of annihilation. But one day, perhaps, the compunctions thought that had long been struggling for vent, succeeds. His eyes are

suffused with tears at the recollection of his transgressions. It is now that the consciousness of his guilt and enormity overwhelms him, and the first movement of his spirit is an approach to the pit of despair. God never can forgive *me*, is the foreboding language of his heart. But let him not despair: the mercy of God in Christ is sufficient to reach his case, and, like a mighty ocean, to roll over the mountains of his sins. Through the sacrifice of his Son, God can be as perfectly reconciled to him as to the individual who has offended him but in the slightest degree. Let him go, then, for this reconciliation, to God, with the full confidence of obtaining it, if implored in the Saviour's name; and let him form his exclamation by that of the Prophet, saying, "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and that delighteth in mercy?"

III. Notice, thirdly, the evidences of forgiveness. Some are unmindful of evidences upon this subject altogether: they think it enough to believe that they are forgiven, without being concerned to make out any proof of it from the character they sustain. Others are deceived in the nature and amount of the evidences they bring forward on this point. If there are those who rate them too high, and thus deprive themselves of consolation, there are many others who run to the far more dangerous extreme of rating them too low, and thus foster in their bosoms a most delusive and treacherous hope. Let us, then, attend to those evidences with seriousness of mind, making the scriptures our only infallible guide and standard. By these we are warranted in placing repentance foremost. How can we expect Christ to deliver us from that burden of guilt under which we do not groan, or to cancel

that sentence of condemnation which we do not feel to hang over our head? Repentance is not the meritorious cause, but the indispensable qualification of our receiving forgiveness, and is ever in the scriptures associated with remission of sins. Next to repentance, reformation is absolutely necessary. The heir of glory ceases to be the slave of vice. He gives proof, by not returning to the practice of the sins which he bewailed, that he bewailed them sincerely. And not only are the weeds of sin uprooted in his character, but the graces of the spirit are implanted. The boasted virtues of a natural man will not endure a comparison with those of the same order which appear in him. In those acts of morality which the world appreciates and applauds, he far surpasses others; and in addition to these, he possesses attachments and principles, with reference to the service of God, to which the heart of a worldling is a stranger. Finally, forgiveness under the gospel infallibly produces love to Christ. He is seen in the christian dispensation as the ground of its communication, and the medium of its conveyance. Every view of heaven presents him to us as ministering and interceding for us before God, in garments dyed with his own blood. Can we receive a pardon from his hand, the fruit of his former agonies, and of his present intercession, and feel no wish springing up in our hearts, to be devoted to his service, and to live for ever to his praise? Impossible. As, then, without these evidences, the testimony of an angel respecting our forgiveness would leave it more than doubtful, so, in the possession of them, we are better certified of the fact, than we could be by any external testimony, or the most extraordinary communication.

1. Let not the greatness of our sins, then, deter us from the expectation of pardon, if it be sought with earnestness, and for the alone sake of Christ. In presenting myself to him for salvation, what greater or more effectual barrier can be thrown in the way of my receiving it, than has been already removed in the case of others? He who pardoned the adulterous woman of Samaria—bore the penitent thief with him from the cross to paradise, and showed mercy to Saul of Tarsus:—can he be either unable or unwilling to show mercy to any penitent, however dreadful his guilt, or deep his stains? But let us guard against a prevalent and fatal mistake—that of delaying our approach to him for this purpose, till we are better fitted and prepared to receive his favour. Vain is the attempt. Nothing good can come from me till I am united to him, and this union must be preceded by my pardon and acceptance. Let me, then, be willing to become now, what I must be, if ever I am saved at all—a sinner saved by grace.

2. We may surely calculate on a continuance and renewal of that forgiveness, which the gospel offers to every true penitent. That our sins do offend and provoke God to anger, as supposed in the language of the text, none can doubt; but that this anger is ready to subside, on our repentance and return to him, it expressly asserts. “He passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage, and retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.” The backslider is invited by name to return to him, and in a most particular manner assured of a gracious reception. Such an assurance is, indeed, rendered necessary by the sense of ingratitude which wounds the heart of the inconstant professor,

and the peculiarly distressing nature of the fears that torment him. Because he seems to have been pardoned in vain before, he despairs of receiving it again. But how can he resist this tender language? “Return, O backslider, for I am married unto thee. How can I give thee up? I will heal thy backslidings, receive thee graciously, and love thee freely: so shalt thou render unto me the calves of thy lips.”

3. The pardon of sin should reconcile us to the deepest and greatest temporal affliction. We are very liable to mistake the dispensations of God. We think that Providence only watches over us, and cares for us, when what is pleasing happens to us: but how often have we traced in some severe affliction the greatest proof of the divine kindness and concern for our welfare! “For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth; and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.” It is by character only, and not by any outward event which can happen to ourselves, that we can judge of the disposition of the Deity towards us; and if, upon this ground, we can assure ourselves of an interest in his forgiving love, we may rest perfectly satisfied, that, whatever befalls us by his permission or appointment, though of the most painful and alarming nature, and though, in a great measure, brought upon us by our own misconduct, is fraught with real benefit, and must issue in our welfare. “All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purposo.” We may say with Luther, “Strike, Lord, wherever thou pleasest; thou canst not hurt me—thou canst not hate me—for thou hast forgiven me all my sins.”

ORIGINAL ESSAYS, COMMUNICATIONS, &c.

ON THE ADVANTAGES WHICH
ATTEND EXPOSITORY DIS-
COURSES DELIVERED FROM
THE PULPIT.

IT has been asked, whether expounding the scriptures with preaching, or preaching alone, be more adapted to the edification of the people? This to students of divinity, and public teachers of religion, is one of the most important practical questions which can be proposed for discussion. As the christian ministry was instituted to effect the conversion of sinners, and the building up of the saints on their most holy faith, to discover what are the best means for attaining these grand ends, supplies a legitimate subject of inquiry, which demands close and serious attention. In the present day, the teachers of christianity, with few exceptions, confine their pulpit instructions to the delivery of sermons. Is this practice wise and well-judged? We are all so much under the influence of habit, that it is not very easy to quit a track, in which we have long moved, and seen our elders and superiors precede us. In reference to a practice which has prevailed during a series of years, "most men, without exercising any thought on the matter, have a sort of quiet hereditary notion, that it always was as it is, and is as it ought to be." But custom itself must be brought to the test of reason. I am fully persuaded, that, by a judicious and well-timed course of exposition, more good is likely to be done, than by the ordinary mode of preaching always from detached texts. My reasons shall now be briefly stated.

1. By judiciously expounding the scriptures, a minister may

hope to give a clearer exhibition of the great principles of religion, in their mutual connexions and diversified bearings, than could otherwise be given.

The majority of hearers evince a strong propensity to string together a number of insulated texts, which, when ill-understood, cannot possibly be well applied. If they have any scheme of doctrine, it is not collected immediately from the scriptures, but from books of controversy, or from preachers, who furnish them with a certain set of testimonies and proofs, in support of the opinions they have espoused, and resolved to defend. Now any thing which has a tendency to lead men directly to the fountain of revealed truth, rather than render them content to draw from the shallow reservoirs of human structure, is worthy of commendation. Expository discourses, if properly studied and impressively delivered, indisputably have such a tendency. They present the ample scope of the inspired writers, and at once enlarge the narrow mind, and enliven the cold heart. I am very far from wishing to encourage that sleepy indifference to doctrinal tenets, which with some passes under the soft but suspected names of candour and liberality. If hearers of the gospel do not learn to discriminate, and separate truth from error, they cannot, as the Apostle Paul says, "have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." But while doctrines essential to godliness, ought to be luminously exhibited, they should also have their proper place, as parts of a grand whole. In giving any of them due prominence, let us not forget another requisite, I mean propor-

tion. How then, it will be said, is this to be done? If the sacred writers are our best guides, I answer, by a close adherence to them. No other method, in my judgment, is so well calculated to open the drift and design of the several books of the holy scriptures. Doubtless, there will be found in every congregation some whose minds are shackled by a contracted system; and where the trammels are not quite cast off, they may be so loosened as to give the thinking powers a little more play and active energy.

2. By judiciously expounding the scriptures, a minister has a better opportunity of unfolding the true meaning of those parts which are difficult, than he otherwise could have. There are in the volume of inspiration, apparent contradictions to be reconciled, and obscurities to be removed, which a scribe, well instructed in the mysteries of the kingdom, will not pass over unnoticed. The poet's keen satire is not altogether unmerited:

Most commentators each dark passage
shun,
And hold their farthing candles to the sun.

I grant, indeed, that there are some very intricate portions of the sacred volume, which it might be impracticable to explain, so as to render them intelligible and instructive to a popular audience; and therefore, it were improper to make the attempt. I grant, also, that the pulpit expositor cannot safely venture upon those elaborate discussions, which are valuable in the writer, whose work is intended to meet the eye, rather than address the ear: but after making these concessions, I still think it an important part of a minister's employ, to give the people all the assistance in his power, for understanding such passages as are most likely to be misconstrued. Without losing sight of his chief object, which

is to leave a warm and salutary impression of divine things on the heart, much pleasing information may be communicated to those, who have no access to the books, or other sources, whence it is supplied. By a competent acquaintance with the idioms of the original languages in which the word of God is conveyed, and a knowledge of the physical products and peculiarities, or local customs and usages in the places where they were written, it is possible for a teacher to illustrate many parts of the sacred volume, without attempting to play the critic, or the philosopher, a practice which never fails to disgust plain people. We can scarcely conceive of any thing more adapted to quicken the ardour of private christians, in perusing the scriptures at home, than such elucidations received from the pulpit. That the practice of regularly expounding the word of God is admirably calculated to answer these important ends, is too obvious to require proof. The method here recommended has long prevailed in the northern part of our island, and to its happy effect, as one main cause, some have not scrupled to attribute that superior measure of scriptural knowledge, possessed by the people of Scotland. I am aware it has been objected, that an itching and vain curiosity is sometimes thus excited, but surely a cold, heartless, and torpid indifference, is both more common, and far more to be deprecated. I grant, however, that every minister must judge, whether the general spirit of inquiry among his hearers is such, as to require a stimulus, or a sedative, or only a corrective; but certainly individual cases of exception cannot supersede a rule.

3. By judiciously expounding the scriptures, a minister will find a fair occasion to touch some

points of character, or treat at large on some relative duties, which could not so well be handled in sermons.

A preacher who has the salvation of his fellow men at heart, must temper his zeal with prudence, and join with inflexible fidelity an exquisite tenderness. Sinners intrenched in the strong holds of vice, and even good men entangled in dangerous snares, are not always to be driven out, or extricated by violent measures. Evil tempers and evil habits are often rooted and strengthened, by unskillful attempts to weaken and subdue them. Nathan wisely employed a parable, to prepare the way for that pointed message of reproof, which he had to direct to the conscience of the King of Israel. He is a novice in the science of the human heart, who does not know, that it is more often, and more easily captivated by covert and circuitous approaches, than by open and direct assaults. The ample range of holy writ supplies us with a great variety of characters, which, in a well selected course of exposition, may be held up as portraits, in whose features many will see in striking colours their own likeness. There are some unsuspected avenues of temptation, some relative duties, some delicate cases of conscience, which it is difficult fairly to introduce from detached texts. Faithfulness is, indeed, necessary in a public teacher of religion, but it is of great importance to guard against any thing which wears the aspect of personality. Now many of those matters, to which I have just referred, will come in naturally while a connected portion of scripture is expounded, and sometimes derive from recent events, or present circumstances, a degree of weight and interest, which cannot fail to render them deeply impressive. Even hearers least

habituated to reflect, have often been so struck with the appositeness of a coincidence of this kind, where no premeditated purpose on the part of the preacher, could for a moment be supposed, as to acknowledge their conviction, that the movements of Providence were in harmony with the ministration of the divine word, from the lips of their spiritual instructors.

4. By judiciously expounding the scriptures, the progress of dangerous errors is most successfully counteracted.

Those baneful doctrines which degrade the person and depreciate the work of Christ, or deny the obligations of the moral law, and supersede the calls of the gospel, can no longer be maintained than while the appeal of their advocates is made to texts torn from their natural connexion. The public teacher, who copiously and faithfully expatiates on the most interesting portions of the divine word, with a powerful hand sweeps away many refuges of lies, in which subtle sophists and wild enthusiasts take shelter. Few heretics dare to stand a contest with the man, who in this manner skilfully employs the sword of the spirit. I know several congregations, once deeply infected with the antinomian leaven, which have been happily cleared of the deadly taint, by the beneficial influence of pulpit expositions. Some christians, who formerly could relish nothing but doctrines of a hyper-calvinistic kind, have owned that it was by hearing the scriptures explained in their connected order, that they first discovered their error. Nor does this method furnish an antidote to one species of false doctrine alone, it counteracts the deleterious poison, in all the manifold forms and mixtures in which it can be administered.

5. By judiciously expounding

the scriptures, an additional interest is imparted to the preaching of sermons.

The christian pastor, who ministers to the same people for a succession of years, has great need to study the means best adapted to keep up attention to his instructions. Variety, both as to matter and method, is highly desirable. As this, however, is a position that none perhaps will deny, it would be wasting time to advance arguments for its support. But the question of most importance is, how may variety be maintained, without either deviating from sound evangelical doctrine, in the substance of the instruction, or indulging fancy at the expense of judgment, in the manner of its communication? A good steward of the household of faith must bring forth things new and old; but take special care, that his provisions are wholesome, being drawn from the great Master's storehouse. As to method also, the love of variety ought not to carry us beyond certain limits. For a minister in the morning of the Lord's day to give a long flat paraphrase on a whole chapter, and then in the afternoon, deliver an elegant essay on some theological subject, to which a text is loosely prefixed as a scripture motto, is not the way to interest or edify the people. Is there not, however, a medium between these culpable extremes? Without verging to the right hand or to the left, is there not sufficient room to exercise talent, combined with taste, and consecrated to the noblest purposes, in declaring and enforcing the whole counsel of God? By a well-judged diversity of plan, in his public ministrations, by sometimes expatiating over a wider surface of scripture, and, at other times, and perhaps more frequently, deducing his discourse from a single text,

a preacher at once fixes the attention, and animates the heart. Thus, from the habit of expounding, sermons have less of triteness, and more of the force and attraction which attend the grace of novelty.

After what has been advanced, it may perhaps be asked, how shall we account for the fact, that so very few ministers pursue the course here recommended? For one who gives a regular exposition of any book or books of scripture, probably twenty, at least, confine themselves to the delivery of sermons. The truth is, the religious world itself has its fashions; and those who occupy it, are carried from one extreme to its opposite, and seldom hold the proper medium. Luther, Calvin, Ridley, Cranmer, and many other of our most eminent reformers, gave up much of their time, with good effect, to expound the scriptures. Succeeding divines in the same field of labour, stretched their outline with a more bold and comprehensive sweep, but with less judgment and symmetry. It is well known, that many of the tedious and unwieldy commentaries of our fore-fathers which now quietly repose amidst dust and cobwebs, were once delivered from the pulpit. The effect was what might have been anticipated: congregations dwindled away, and a method more adapted to engage the mind, and affect the heart, gradually came into use. Yet even in later times, a few of the old school persevered with singular obstinacy in a practice so unfavourable to edification. If, as it has been asserted, Dr. Gill actually delivered his nine massy folios from the pulpit, we cannot wonder that he should have had only a handful of people to hear him.

But, beside the disrepute into which expository discourses have

fallen, from the cause above referred to, many ministers have shown a disinclination to them, even when the people have evinced the contrary. In fact, this mode of teaching, though exceedingly useful when well conducted, requires far more skill and patient investigation, than composing and delivering sermons. Those who take the charge of a christian church in our days, are necessarily so much employed in advocating the cause of various benevolent institutions, and promoting the general interests of religion, as greatly to abridge the opportunities which they themselves sincerely wish to devote to study. Now I think no one ought to attempt exposition, who cannot command time, and summon resolution to enter upon it, as a very serious and momentous work, which requires close reading, profound thought, ardent devotion, and steady perseverance. It does appear to me, that this exercise is calculated to prove of great use to a minister's own mind, by rousing his energies, habituating him to research, and saving him from much of that fluctuating indecision in the choice of subjects, which is so often felt, and deeply lamented. Nor is it, surely, a sanguine supposition, or a wild conjecture, that such a mode of instruction is likely to operate as a potent antidote, either to cure or prevent that fickleness, that wayward versatility, with which hearers, especially in cities and large towns, are unhappily seized. Those who are once deeply interested in any part of the sacred volume, which has been already clearly opened and impressively applied, will naturally look forward with awakened and lively expectation, to the ground not yet occupied, and the subsequent course in which they have to follow their guide. A man who

leaves a company when a narrative is half told, which has emphatically pleased him, is not willing, without some urgent cause, to miss the next opportunity that shall put him in possession of the sequel; and it is certainly possible, and highly desirable, to excite a similar feeling in those who attend the ministry of the gospel.

If then it is admitted, that expounding the scriptures is likely to benefit the public teacher himself, and promote the best interests of the people, it deserves inquiry, how it may be done to most advantage. I have before hinted, that no preacher ought to turn occasional expositor, with the view of saving either time or trouble. Such an undertaking resorted to as a cheap expedient, is almost sure to fail. Yet, on the other hand, there is danger lest it should be imagined, that unwearied toil in turning over commentaries, and amassing or digesting copious stores of erudition, may alone suffice to perform the arduous task with ability and success. The bulk of most congregations is made up of plain people, who are neither willing nor able to follow a teacher through intricate and perplexing discussions. Such as welcome a little light thrown upon a dark passage, are disgusted with minute criticisms, and wearied with dull prosing descants, which aim at no useful or specific object. Where explanation is wanted, it ought to be given with conciseness, and the chief part of the time be reserved for practical inferences. A perpetual regard to the main end of the christian ministry, will dictate the propriety of aiming to feed the flame of devotion where it now burns, and of kindling it in those hearts which never felt it. Perhaps it is hardly possible to refer preachers to a better model for imitation, in prosecuting this work,

than Archbishop Leighton. The high terms in which Dr. Doddridge commends him, are too well known to need repeating.

The pious editor of his remains, recently published, justly observes, "His critical remarks on the original languages in which the Old Testament and the New were written, are neither ostentatious nor trifling; neither far-fetched nor tedious. They discover both judgment and ingenuity. This sacred mineralogist, instead of pursuing verbal criticism, which only levels a few inequalities of the surface, sinks a shaft, and brings forth precious ore from the mine below. By a masterly stroke, often unexpectedly, and always in the most natural manner, he sets the truth in a new and resplendent light. His unrivalled commentary on the first Epistle of Peter contains many instances of this sort."

J. T.

ESSAYS ON TRUTH.

No. IV.

(Continued from page 400.)

IF, in the ordinary transactions of society, it be a matter of great importance, that the standard used to ascertain the quantity or value of things should be an approved one, or, in other words, that weights and measures should be just, and the legal coin genuine—the greater importance of fixing upon a proper standard in morality and religion must be universally seen and acknowledged. As the principles and obligations of real religion concern not only a few individuals, but all mankind, and involve their best interests in this world, and in the world to come, the test given to decide respecting them, should of course possess qualities answerable to its importance and design.

For this purpose, it must, in

the first place, be *invariable in its nature*, continuing unaltered amidst all the fluctuations of human opinion, or the perversions of sophistry and prejudice. If the rules or principles to which men appeal, in points of doubtful disputation, or in modes of faith and forms of worship, be in their own nature changeable, their supposed suitableness and utility are fallacious; and, by the frequent and natural variations of all things mutable, will prove the same things to be true and false at different periods, or to different individuals at the same periods. Hence it happens that the religious opinions and usages of mankind, both in ancient and modern times, either having no proper test of truth, or else not making a right use of the one possessed, have been, and still continue to be, characterized by the greatest diversity; while opposite and contradictory views of the same subject, are maintained by different persons with the same confidence, integrity, and decision. In the science of numbers, no such differences exist; but the Elements of Euclid, the father of mathematical knowledge, are the same now as they were in the time of Euclid, upwards of twenty-one centuries ago, and will continue unchanged and unchangeable, in all ages and revolutions of the world. If, in like manner, all men were possessed of an immutable standard of divine truth, and were at the same time equally faithful in using it, contradictory opinions would in a great measure cease, and a general and permanent unanimity would in many respects be established.

But the test of divine truth must, *secondly, be absolute in its authority*, being confirmed by evidence in which the mind will readily acquiesce, and sanctioned by a power from whose verdict

there is no reference or appeal. If we thought fit to consult the opinions of a man eminently distinguished for his talents and learning, and in the course of our inquiries found that his judgment was on some points different from ours, we should not, on that account alone, conclude that our own views were erroneous, and that his must be adopted as indubitably true. Though a deep sense of his mental superiority would perhaps induce us to pause, and examine afresh the nature and grounds of our belief, yet the possibility of his being mistaken would prevent an implicit acquiescence in his judgment, and constrain us to call in some higher authority, before we relinquished our own views. In cases of civil contention, likewise, it is customary for mankind to appeal from the verdict of an inferior tribunal, to the highest legal authority in the land, where the final decision of the supreme court, invested with legislative power, ends the controversy, and ensures submission. On the same principle it is obvious, that no system can be appealed to, as the supreme standard of truth and error, good and evil, unless its authority over the conscience be deemed absolute, and the decisions it may give be acquiesced in by the judgment, as unquestionable truths.

But the test of divine truth must, *thirdly, be universal in its adaptation and applicableness*; not being confined by national or sectarian peculiarities, but adapted alike for all men, under all the variations of human society, in every age, community, or clime. Instead of being confined by geographical boundaries, like the language, customs, laws, and government of different nations, it should extend, or be capable of extending, as universally as the elements of human accountability

CONG. MAG. No. 22.

or intelligence, and the desirableness of knowledge and virtue, piety of heart, and the hope of a future life. Like the atmosphere which surrounds the globe, or the orb of day whose light and heat are diffused over every nation, the directory of human conduct in the great business of religion, should be receivable with equal propriety and effect, by men of every nation or language, climate or colour.

But, *fourthly, it should be familiar in its rules and decisions*; not restricted to a few individuals, or requiring those talents and advantages which a few only can possess or acquire, but adapted to general use, and capable of being properly understood and applied by persons of ordinary capacity and attainments. If the meaning of its directions, like points of law, could be discovered only by men of superior minds, and profound learning, its deficiency, as the rule of life, would be radical, and the great body of mankind could derive no benefit from its instructions.

But if these qualities are indispensably requisite in the test of truth, it seems evident that nothing can provide such a test, short of a divine revelation, conveyed to the world at large by a written and inspired testimony. This, and this alone, can be deemed invariable in its nature, absolute in its authority, universal in its adaptation, and familiar in its rules. Amidst all the variations of human opinion, and the revolutions of human power, the principles and authority of the sacred volume are the same. No sect or nation can claim an exclusive right to its discoveries, or attempt to bound the circle of its influence; but all men stand on the same ground, and have an equal right to examine its contents for their own benefit. Learning or genius,

though valuable, are by no means necessary to a profitable acquaintance with its teachings; but, in points of essential moment, both in faith and practice, it is like a plain path, in which the way-faring man, though comparatively a fool, need not err. On this ground, therefore, the scriptures alone, we conceive, can be regarded as the supreme and unerring test of truth and righteousness.

Reason, it may perhaps be said, is evidently the gift of God, imparted alike to all mankind, and intended to direct us both in knowing and performing our duty to ourselves, our neighbour, and our God. This directory, it may be further urged, is common to all men, is ready at hand upon all occasions, and must possess many advantages over a written revelation, conveyed through the medium of foreign languages which only a few can learn. And, though the scriptures be nominally regarded as the standard of our opinions, yet every one, it may be also pleaded, will *really* and *practically* bring scripture itself to the test of his own reason, and believe no more than what he understands, or deems reasonable. So that, whatever may be said of the supremacy of scripture, as the alone standard of divine truth, reason is in fact the test, by which finally men's opinions are or can be determined.

But, in reply to these objections, we answer, that many things may be assumed respecting the sufficiency or the claims of reason, which have no foundation in fact, but are wholly ideal and fallacious. When persons affirm or intimate, that reason is the test of truth, it is natural to ask, what is meant by reason? Does it mean the reasoning faculty of the mind itself, or a set of indisputable maxims

to which the exercise of reason conducts all men? It cannot mean those first principles, which constitute what is called common sense, and the denial of which would involve the charge of absurdity, contradiction, or insanity, because they exist in the nature of things independently of human reason; and are the means by which even the existence of the rational faculty is perceived. It would, therefore, be absurd to confound reason with the test of its own existence, or to decide upon matters of pure revelation, and the realities of the unseen world, by a standard applicable alone to the ordinary perceptions of human intellect. But by reason we evidently mean, not the collective reason of all mankind, nor the combined reason of any sect or assembly in particular, but that power of judging for himself what is right, which every man is supposed to have in common with his neighbour. Is, then, each man's reason a certain, immutable, independent, and unerring principle, like the laws of gravitation and repulsion, which perpetuate the movements, and preserve the harmony of the material world? Is it not rather a capability of perceiving the truth, with more or less perspicuity, when the means of information are afforded, or the necessary evidences of the case produced?

Hence it is manifest, that truth exists independently of human reason; and remains the same whether our ideas of it are right or wrong, clear and comprehensive, or confused and partial. The discoveries of science and of revelation may, therefore, enlarge the boundaries of human knowledge, without adding a single grain to the authority of reason; just as judicial courts ascertain doubtful cases without assuming a legislative or sovereign autho-

rity. Reason, indeed, can never act as a dictator or lawgiver, who forms or modifies the standard of right and wrong; but as a judge, who examines and ascertains questions of dispute by a given standard: the nature of things being the standard of truth in philosophy, and the oracles of God in religion.

Reason cannot, therefore, be regarded as the test of divine truth, because it never assumes that authority even in common affairs, but determines the value of things by a given rule, and ascertains the truth or falsehood of a proposition or report, by comparing it with other principles or rules of judgment, previously admitted to be true. The transactions of trade, the calculations of arithmetic, the problems of geometry, and indeed the whole circle of human knowledge, might be adduced in illustration of this fact, and in confirmation of the doctrine we infer from it.

Reason, moreover, is insufficient for this purpose, because it is in no respect infallible, or even uniform in its decisions, on any subject wherein doubt can exist; not even in the same individual at different periods of his life. Reason, in fact, is an intellectual chameleon, changing with the influence of external impressions, or the degrees of light which it happens to enjoy. If, therefore, it be received and depended upon, as the rule of our faith and practice, it will render truth and duty, whose nature is immutable, as uncertain and capricious, as the fluctuations of opinion, and the reveries of thought.

But we cannot regard reason as the test of truth, because, *finally*, every opinion, how erroneous or absurd soever it may be, appears rational to a person who thinks it agrees with the first principles of his own faith, or the rules laid down for the

direction of his own judgment. When a person declares a doctrine to be absurd or irrational, it does not follow that it is so in fact, but that it appears so to the person who affirms it, according to the principles which he has before laid down as true, or the modes of thinking to which he has been accustomed. When, likewise, another person declares the same doctrine to be rational and true, it only proves that it appears so to his reason. But, if the data from which they argue be wrong, or the mode of reasoning which they adopt fallacious, the results to which reason brings them, though in their own apprehension clear and indubitable, will nevertheless be untrue.

Hence it is a fact, of daily occurrence, that the verdict of reason, in two different men, pronounces the same doctrine, both true and false, absurd and rational; and is a test which admits and creates endless contradictions and the grossest errors. Unless we choose, therefore, to wander in perpetual uncertainties, without a resting place for our faith, there is no alternative between the Romish doctrine of papal infallibility, with liberty perhaps to choose our own pope, and the true Protestant principle of an implicit submission to the word of God, as the only authoritative standard both of faith and practice.

By this reasoning, it may be said, you depreciate the faculty of reason, and become the patron of credulity, demolishing the barriers by which alone absurdity and superstition can be restrained. But we reply, our sole aim in making these remarks, is, to confine reason, as well as revelation, within its own province; while we contend for its importance, and the necessity of exercising its capacity, and enlarging its perception, by all the means

and opportunities in our power. As the sun, though the fountain of light, would in vain beautify the face of nature, unless the organ of sight were formed and employed to perceive the objects, which it renders visible, so will revelation be of no use to us, unless our reasoning powers are called forth by due attention, to understand its discoveries, and receive its truths, and practise its injunctions.

If, then, it be inquired, what we conceive to be the province of reason in reference to divine truth, we answer briefly, *first*, To study the constitution of nature, and the order of providence, that we may decipher the lessons which they teach concerning God.—*Secondly*, To ascertain, by a proper course of inquiries, whether the genuineness of the sacred books be sufficiently authenticated, and the evidences of their truth and divine authority sufficiently decisive to justify and require a firm belief.—*Thirdly*, To find out the original meaning or real import of the facts, doctrines, and duties of the sacred volume, in all their relations and results, both as objects of faith, and rules of conduct. And, *fourthly*, To employ the best means of which we are capable, for our own improvement, for the promotion of truth, and the greater advancement of universal righteousness.

But, in finding out truth, it may be further asked, what course must we pursue in deciding upon doubtful texts of scripture, in consequence of which the standard of truth itself seems to be obscure? *First*, we should examine the passages in question solely with a desire to find out their true meaning.—*Secondly*, we should affix to a doubtful text no meaning that is manifestly inconsistent with plain and undisputed declarations, but

should rather remain in ignorance of a text, when it has the appearance of contradiction or ambiguity, than presumptuously contend for a doubtful opinion.—*Thirdly*, we should explain detached passages and phrases by the connexion in which they occur, by parallel expressions, and by the clear analogy of unquestionable principles.—And, *fourthly*, we should prosecute our inquiries with humility and prayer, and be cordially prepared to receive the truth implicitly on the ground of scripture testimony, whether it correspond with our pre-conceived ideas on the subject or not.

Allow me then to close this essay by enforcing the obligations we are under to act upon these principles. Divine revelation, remember, is our only guide to the knowledge of truth, the services of religion, or the happiness of eternity. It is a common gift designed alike for all men, and none can obstruct its light with innocence or impunity. Reason and revelation were both given to be nicely applied, and properly improved, in their respective provinces. If, then, through prejudice or passion, we pervert, abuse, or neglect them, ignorance and error, instead of being blameless, will be highly criminal, inexcusable, and dangerous. But to the humble and prayerful inquirer, who is willing to be taught by the faithful and true witness, divine assistance is promised, to preserve him from fatal errors—to inform his judgment—to guide him into all necessary and saving truth—and to lead him by its influence in the way everlasting.

ON THE MORAL RESPONSIBILITY OF MAN.

THAT every one of us shall give an account of himself to God, is

a truth the most awful and momentous; and is founded on that part of our nature, which, more than any other, forms our specific distinction. Who that reflects on his own being can pronounce these words, -- 'I am accountable to God for all I think, for all I say, and for all I do,' without feeling astonished and overcome by the greatness and importance of the truth! And the pious impression would be materially deepened, by a comparison and contrast of human nature with other parts of creation. Of all the vast and innumerable works of God in the material universe, man is probably the only accountable creature. The whole earth teems with life, with activity, with enjoyment: the soil, the waters, nay, the very atmosphere itself, are all impregnated, and so to speak saturated with life. Many noble creatures, excelling man in strength, roam the forest, sweep the seas, or "ride upon the wings of the wind." The luminaries of heaven continue in the places assigned them from the beginning, and their lustre is never diminished, nor their power impaired by age. Countless are they as the sand of the sea; limited, indeed, both in numbers and duration, but their limits are unknown to man. To the animated part of creation, we are allied by many striking points of resemblance. We are connected by a likeness of form, by similar appetites and instincts; and with many of them by similar passions, and powers of intelligence. But in regard to moral responsibility, we stand perfectly distinct from them all. "The spirit of the beast goeth downward; and, glorious as the heavenly bodies are, when they have shone their appointed time, they will be extinguished and destroyed. Man, though apparently and even really weaker than many of the other

creatures, is after all their lord, and shall be the survivor when they have no existence.

This truth stamps importance on our being, and naturally gives us a greater interest in ourselves. This stupendous fabric was made for me! These various creatures, in so many respects resembling myself, and even surpassing me in some things, are under my dominion, and are granted by the great Creator for my use: the end of their being is answered when I have been served by them! Who then am I? "Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him!"

Feeling ourselves raised to this eminence in the creation, who can fail to inquire, And why do I live? What is the end of my being? If all the creatures serve me, whom should I serve? Surely it becomes me to serve and love him who made all, and who has granted to man such privileges! Yes, I am accountable to him! If I have dominion over the inferior creatures, God has dominion over me!

These deductions are clear and natural, and tend to strengthen our sense of responsibility; but the responsibility itself is founded on a real and inherent difference in the nature of man. This is more easily felt than described. Conscience, or a sense of right and wrong, is commonly considered as the formal difference between man and other animals; but this is not of itself sufficient; for some animals, which we have no reason to think are accountable to God, have a sense of right and wrong, manifesting itself in joy, fear, shame, &c. We must go farther in our inquiries, therefore, in order to know the real source of human responsibility. Perhaps we shall not err in ascribing it to a peculiar power of reflecting on our own actions,

our thoughts, and our words, which power may, perhaps, without impropriety, be called consciousness. Much difference of opinion on this subject prevails among philosophers, and it becomes us to speak with modesty on things so obscure.

Consciousness or reflection, then, joined with higher degrees of intelligence, those powers which we have in common with brutes, only capable of a wider range of more complex operations, and employed on objects of greater importance, as connected with our future destiny, may constitute the *physical* basis of our responsibility. The *moral* grounds of it are of a different nature, though of course closely connected with our primary constitution. They arise from the character and perfections of God, and from our condition in the world, as related to him. God is the Lord and Proprietor of all things. He is a God of order, and not of confusion. Order reigns throughout the universe. It is displayed in the laws which are indelibly impressed on all the works of God, from the most stupendous, to the most minute. "The sun knoweth his going down. The stork in the heavens knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle, and the crane, and the swallow, observe the time of their coming." All creatures wait upon Him who made them, "that he may give them their meat in due season." God ruleth in the heavens, and the most high among the children of men. His will is the truth, and his will is their law. "He will not lay upon man more than is right: his commandments are not grievous." As our Lord, we are bound to obey his will, and his perfections secure to us a just, a holy, and a benign government. Having received many gifts and endowments from the

hand of our blessed Creator, we are bound to use them according to the intention and end for which they were given, and to render an account of the use made of them. This obligation is evidently founded on the previous communication of that mental power already mentioned. I am by nature raised above the brute creation, and made only "a little lower than the angels;" nay, I have a power within me, which is the connecting link with these angels in the scale of creation. They excel me in wisdom as well as in might, but the difference is only in degrees of intelligence: they are accountable for their actions, and so am I: herein we are one.

To man is given the power of discerning between the true and the false, the good and the evil, the right and the wrong; and it is an ultimate fact, a first principle in the composition of our nature, that we have a consciousness of responsibility. This makes us capable of moral government; capable of receiving laws from God, or from each other; and binds us to the obedience of all just and lawful authority. This faculty is in the scripture, called, "The law written in our hearts;" so that where men have not the advantage of a special revelation from God, they are not released from moral obligation to him and his law; for there is such a connexion between the revealed laws of God, and the original constitution of man, they are so adjusted to each other, that he who obeys not the voice within him, breaks the revealed and written law of God. Thus saith the inspired Apostle Paul;† "When the Gentiles which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which show the

* Rom. ii. 15. † Rom. ii. 14, 15.

work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another."

The mind of man, therefore, is not a mere machine, blindly and irresistibly impelled by an extraneous force, without choice, without consciousness: neither is it the same as the intellect of brutes: nor is it left by the Creator with a boundless freedom to expiate at pleasure, without rule and without restraint. It is limited in its faculties: all its powers are under regulation: wise and salutary laws are impressed on it, as on all the other parts of the works of God, and it cannot act contrary to its own nature. The judgment must select and decide; the memory must treasure up its stores, and produce them when wanted; and the conscience or the consciousness within us must make us feel ourselves accountable to God. And while in this constitution of our nature, there is this necessary regulation and order, it is clear, that so far is such a kind and degree of necessity from releasing us from moral obligation, that it is this very order and constitution which give us our distinction above the brutes, confer on us a degree of freedom which they do not possess, and cause us to feel universally—unless the mind be sophisticated by art and false reasoning—that "every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

(*To be continued.*)



HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE
RISE, PROGRESS, AND PRE-
SENT STATE OF INDEPEN-
DENCY IN SCOTLAND.

NO. VI.

Modern Independents.

THE progress of Independency in Scotland, during the last cen-

tury, was exceedingly slow. For this, various reasons might be assigned. The most important of them are to be found in the peculiar modification of Independency that existed in it; or the combination of certain neutralizing principles and practices with the grand principles of the system. The discriminating judgment of Mr. Scott Moncreif, though he belonged to the established church himself, detected these roots of bitterness in "their low views of the pastoral office, and their unforbearing dispositions and principles about very trifling things." These, as he justly notices, were the ruin of these churches in general, and will infallibly ruin any profession of christianity to which they may attach. Serious and thinking persons, whose minds were well-affected to the leading views of the Congregationalists, were often deterred from connecting themselves with these churches, either from remarking the want of vital christianity, or from a great degree of apparent coldness and inattention to the circumstances of a perishing world. How long things might have continued in this condition, it is impossible to say, had not the operation of providential, though, so far as the agents were concerned, accidental causes, led to the formation of a new body of Independents, whose rise, progress, and present state, we shall now proceed to detail.

When Luther challenged Tetzel, and wrote against indulgencies, he had no idea of separating from the See of Rome, and of setting up a distinct community. More was involved in the principles which the Reformer had adopted, than he himself perceived; and it was not till subsequent events opened his mind, and cleared the path of duty, that Luther was prepared for the im-

portant step which he finally took. On this account, it would be wrong to charge that extraordinary man with insincerity, or with changeableness. He appears always to have acted according to his judgment and conscience at the time; and that which his adversaries called change, was the steady operation and necessary result of the fundamental truths which he had previously embraced. The application of this remark to the modern history of Independency will be obvious as we proceed.

The founders of the last and most numerous class of Independents in Scotland, were Robert and James Haldane, Esquires, and Messrs. Greville Ewing, and William Innes, ministers of the established church, with several other very respectable persons, of different communions, who, at the beginning, or shortly after, united with them.

Mr. Robert Haldane, a gentleman of family, and of large property, had his attention turned to christianity, about the year 1794. Some time after this, he first heard of the Baptist Missionary Society, and their mission in Bengal. It immediately struck him that he was spending his time in the country to little profit, while, from the command of property which he possessed, he might be somewhere extensively useful. He deliberated on it for some time, and then proposed to Mr. Innes, Mr. Bogue, of Gosport, and Mr. Ewing, that they should go out to Bengal, and there spend their lives in disseminating the gospel. On their agreeing to this proposition, he determined on selling his estates, and devoting the whole of his property to defray the expense of the mission. Before, however, they could proceed to India, it was necessary to obtain the consent of the Company; but this, after repeated

applications, they found themselves unable to procure. Mr. Haldane had, however, sold his estate before the result was ascertained. Neither Mr. Ewing nor Mr. Innes had yet left the church of Scotland. They were both comfortably settled: the one, as minister of Lady Glenorchy's chapel, the other, in the second charge of Stirling; but, for some time, both of them had been much dissatisfied with many things in the established church, and especially with the restrictions imposed by the church-courts on the preaching of the gospel where it was evidently wanted.

On Mr. Haldane's being disappointed in getting out to India, his attention was turned to the state of religion at home; and it appeared to him, that much was necessary to be done, and that many things were practicable. Missionary Societies had, for some time, been exerting themselves to send the knowledge of the christian religion to foreign nations; but as no extraordinary efforts were making, to win over the infidels among ourselves, many people began to object to christians spending their zeal abroad, and doing nothing more than usual at home, while, in many places, there was a confessed deficiency of the means of grace. Christians felt the force of this objection, from whatever motive it was urged, and began to show an unusual concern for the best interests of their countrymen, as well as for strangers. The first effort which this occasioned, was the formation of a number of sabbath-evening schools, where many poor children received the benefit of religious instruction. Mr. Haldane, though he much approved of these schools, was not the originator of them. In the summer of 1797, a journey to the North of Scotland was under-

taken, for the purpose of preaching the gospel, by Mr. James Haldane, and Mr. John Aikman, who had studied for the ministry, but had declined joining the Scots church, not being able conscientiously to subscribe to the whole of its confession. In this measure, all the parties, previously mentioned, cordially agreed. In the month of December, that same year, a Society was formed in Edinburgh, called, "The Society for propagating the Gospel at Home." It was composed of persons of various denominations, who were of the same mind on the leading doctrines of christianity. Its objects were to employ approved men as itinerant preachers, to encourage schools, especially sabbath schools, to promote the reading of the scriptures, circulate pious tracts, and to establish libraries of books on practical religion. In the formation of this Society, the Messrs. Haldanes and Aikman took an active part. This institution was for many years an instrument of great good in many destitute parts of Scotland.

The next thing that took place was the employment of the Circus, in Edinburgh, as a place of worship. A few religious persons wished to see something like a tabernacle in Edinburgh, a thought which had been suggested to them by a minister from England. In pursuance of this idea, the Circus was engaged for a few months. Mr. Rowland Hill preached at the opening of this place, and afterwards made an extensive itinerating tour through Scotland. The multitudes that attended encouraged the prosecution of the plan, and, after some time, a church was formed, a measure which was not originally intended, but which arose entirely out of the circumstances in which the peo-

ple who assembled there found themselves placed. The constitution of this church was Independent, as much, perhaps, from necessity as from choice. A very imperfect idea of church government was entertained, probably, by the body of its founders, but as the forms of Presbytery admitted of no union or co-operation with such a society as the church formed at the Circus, it unavoidably stood alone; and subscribing to no standard, and acknowledging no authority but the word of God, it soon became a strictly congregational church. We believe no other form of church government will be found universally suited to the circumstances of the world; or admit of the unfettered propagation of the gospel.

When Mr. Hill returned to England, Mr. Robert Haldane accompanied him,—and while travelling along, and revolving the advantages which Edinburgh might derive from the tabernacle, it occurred to him, that such places might be equally useful at Glasgow and Dundee. He considered that, while his brother could supply the Circus, Messrs. Ewing and Innes, with the state of whose sentiments he must, doubtless, have been acquainted, though then in the church, would be well calculated for the other places; and that an interchange might now and then be made with the ministers at the places which had been erected at Perth and in Caithness, and at any others which might be erected upon similar plans. On his return to Scotland, he accordingly proposed this to those two gentlemen, who, agreeing with his proposals, resigned their charges in the church, and shortly afterwards opened meeting-houses in Glasgow and Dundee.

The establishment of an Academy for the education of young

men of piety and talents for the work of the ministry followed upon this. The entire expense of this institution was defrayed by Mr. Haldane, and was at first put under the charge of Mr. Ewing. This establishment also was occasioned entirely by contingent circumstances. The desire for the preaching of the gospel in many places, which could not be gratified by any of the existing means,—the destitute condition of various parts of the country, and the importance of embracing the favourable opportunities of usefulness, while they lasted,—led to vigorous exertions, and were productive of important results.

Besides the chief instruments already noticed, the cause was at an early period espoused and supported by various other active and enlightened individuals. Mr. James Garie, who had long ministered in England and Ireland, and who had been deprived of a living in Scotland, to which he had been presented, for no other reason than his not having been educated at a Scots university, occupied the place at Perth. Aberdeen was filled by Mr. William Stephens. Messrs. Ballantyne and Cleghorn, who had been educated for the Burgher secession, but having left it, had been ordained by the Independents, at Gosport, were settled at Thurso and Wick. Mr. George Cowie, who, for several years, had been a preacher in the church of Scotland, and might have obtained a parish, opened a chapel at Montrose. Mr. George Cowie, of Huntley, a man of apostolic zeal and piety, who was deposed by the Anti-Burgher synod, for no other crime than countenancing itinerating and Independent preachers, originated a congregational church in Huntley, and two others in that neighbourhood. A place was erected in Edinburgh, by Mr. Hal-

dane, capable of containing 3000 persons, in which Mr. James Haldane stately laboured;—another was built by Mr. Aikman, for himself,—and a church was formed, under his pastoral care. Mr. Ralph Wardlaw, educated among the Burghers, relinquished his connexion with them, and erected a chapel for himself in Glasgow, in which he became pastor of a congregational church.

Thus in a much shorter period than could have been expected, the new body in Scotland acquired an extent, and a respectability, which encouraged the expectations of much future success, and excited no small alarm in the minds of those who were attached to the established sect, or who identified the existence or purity of christianity, with the forms of presbyterian church government. Before proceeding farther in this statement of facts, we beg leave to recall the attention of the reader to the evidence afforded by the detail already given.

It is very clear that this body of Independents in Scotland originated, not in any pre-concerted plan, but in a variety of unforeseen circumstances, and from causes many of them independent of, and altogether unconnected with each other. There seemed a preparation, as it were, in the country, and in the minds of many to receive other sentiments on the constitution of the church, than those in which they had been brought up; and the blessing of God on the preaching of the gospel produced, on the part of those who had been benefited, strong attachment to the instruments of their spiritual good. Had the mission to India succeeded, such attempts would never have been made in Scotland, not at least by the same individuals, or to the same extent. The Society for

propagating the Gospel at Home was never designed to promote Independency; as its founders at the formation of it were not themselves Independents; and though it ultimately found supporters mostly in that body, and of course became more connected with its furtherance, the reason of this is perhaps to be found more in the coolness or jealousy of others, than in any thing wrong in the conduct of the Society. In proof of this, it deserves to be noticed, that the Society was assisted to the very last by some of the most distinguished and enlightened members of the church of Scotland, and of other professions also. To attribute that to artifice or design, which can easily be explained on other principles, is unchristian; and induces the suspicion that the accuser is himself not indisposed to resort to measures which he so fearlessly ascribes to others.

It is no less evident, that from the beginning the attempts of this body were made in the large towns of Scotland, as well as on the remote parts of the country. Indeed, there was always a conviction that much was needed to be done in them, as well as elsewhere; and, as might be expected from the means employed, churches were formed in the principal cities, before any were planted in country places. A simple statement of facts is only necessary to expose the falseness of some of the charges against these Independents,—that they were careful to conceal their original and real designs, till they obtained a footing in the country; and then, after pretending zeal for the good of its destitute corners, set themselves down in the fat places of it. We have reason to know and to believe that no sentiments held by them, either as a body or as individuals, were ever disguised or concealed; and to this day, as

will afterwards be shown, their exertions in destitute parts of the country, are to the full proportion of their means, and beyond those of any other denomination of the same extent.

(*To be continued.*)

REPLY TO VERITAS ON CHARITY
SERMONS.

To the Editors.

Gentlemen:

By the note attached to the paper of your correspondent, *Veritas*, in which you applaud his spirit, but intimate that you are not satisfied with his arguments, I am justified in concluding that you regard him as seriously holding the sentiments which he has published, and that you think them worthy of notice; otherwise I should have considered him in no other light than as the author of a not very pardonable *jeu d'esprit*. If, however, his communication was written, not in a moment of sportive ingenuity, but in the "sober sadness" of melancholy conviction, the subject assumes an air of real consequence, especially if by the mode of reasoning he has adopted, others are in danger of being proselyted to his opinions. In this case, the importance of his argument, though in itself small, becomes relatively great, and must be estimated, not by its own intrinsic merit, but by the degree of influence which it is likely to obtain over those who have not soundness of judgment to detect its sophistry. Such persons, however, cannot be numerous. *Veritas* disapproves the preaching of sermons as a mode of recommending any benevolent societies whatsoever to the notice of the people. Whether the object be the support of a hospital for the sick, a house of refuge for the destitute, an asylum for the orphan, or a christian mission to

the idolatrous nations of the earth—whether it be to mitigate the sufferings of miserable man in this world, or to save him from perdition in the world to come—*Veritas* protests against employing the eloquence of the pulpit in behalf of any association of men or christians who unite to promote these objects. The reasons upon which he grounds this protest, appear to be equally extravagant with the protest itself. His objections are not those of avarice, of selfishness, of inhumanity, of irreligion—they do not originate in the indolence which shrinks from exertion, nor in the stern principles of an anti-christian philosophy which knows not how to weep over the calamities of the wretched. *Veritas* avows himself to be a christian and a philanthropist. And, paradoxical as it may seem, he finds his objections against charity sermons, on his profound veneration for the institutions of the gospel. They degrade, in his estimation, the dignity of the gospel ministry, and they are a perversion of the design of its institution.

These objections, if not identical, are evidently involved in each other. To employ the gospel ministry for purposes at variance with the design of God in its institution, is of course to dishonour that ministry; or, on the other hand, in any way to degrade it, supposes a deviation from its original design. It would have been sufficient therefore for *Veritas* to have proved, first, *the perversion of design*, and *the degradation* would necessarily have followed as a corollary from his argument; whereas if he has failed to do this, his whole system and all its consequences must come to nothing, since no truth can be more clear than that the gospel ministry can never be dishonoured by men who hold that office, while they are acting in a

manner conformable to the designs of its divine founder. *Veritas*, however, has not adopted this method, but has proposed, as a distinct and independent objection, occupying the most prominent place in his argument, *the degradation of the christian ministry*, which by no means constitutes his main point, and cannot be established but as a corollary from his second and only remaining objection.

Even admitting the propriety of discussing this objection apart from the other, and presenting it in the form of an independent argument, it would have been more accordant with logical accuracy, to have inverted the order adopted, and to have given his first argument last, and his last first. His objections to charity-sermons would then stand thus:—First; they are a perversion of the designs of God in the institution of the gospel ministry; and, secondly, they degrade the ordinance of preaching, by which these designs are to be effected.

Veritas will pardon me, that I have presumed to state his subject in a new form, before I proceed to reply to his arguments; a freedom of which I should not have availed myself, but that he evidently had not a sufficiently defined and comprehensive conception of his own meaning, to place it with force and accuracy before his readers. Hence he has not only deviated from the natural order of things in the statement of his two capital propositions, but, as might be anticipated, he has carried the same palpable confusion into his subordinate reasonings and illustrations; so that there is nothing to be found under his first head of argument, which might not with greater propriety have been arranged under the second. The statements which he has made,

to demonstrate that the pulpit is *degraded* by charity-sermons, are of such a description, as to involve this degradation precisely so far and no farther than inasmuch as they also involve a supposed *perversion of the designs* of God in the institution of preaching: thus establishing what I have before asserted, that his whole argument resolves itself into his second proposition. That proposition, therefore, includes the whole question before your readers; and it is for them to consider whether the design of the christian ministry is perverted by sermons for benevolent societies.

Veritas asserts the affirmative, and he despairs of demonstrating any truth to the man who does not, with him, detect this degradation. When your readers have examined his argument, they also, perhaps, will despair of the success of any of his future *demonstrations*, but they will trace the inefficacy of his eloquence to a cause widely different from the obtuse intellects of his readers.

His reasonings are reducible to two heads of argument:—

FIRST.—That God instituted the gospel ministry “for the purpose of restoring man to himself, by direct addresses to the conscience, and appeals to the heart;” and that this is not done when a sermon is preached on behalf of a society. This phraseology is dubious and equivocal. A man may be said to be *restored to God*, in the most obvious sense of the term, when he exercises repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ; or, in other words, as soon as, having been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, he becomes “a new creature.” If Veritas employed the term in this obvious sense, his statement contains the truth, but not the whole truth; and the argument deduced from it proceeds on a

most imperfect and mutilated conception of the grand and magnificent purposes of the christian ministry. Is the conversion of the sinner the *exclusive* object of this ministry, and do its solemn functions terminate there? Or, on the contrary, is it not designed for the edification of the faithful, and adapted to their guidance and consolation, as long as they have to struggle with the sorrows and temptations of mortality?—To the law, and the testimony.—“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry; for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” This passage of scripture suggests another, a remoter, and a sublimer sense, in which a sinner may be said to be *restored* to God: that is, when he becomes a perfect saint, and awakes in heaven in the moral likeness of God. And if Veritas will allow this construction to be put upon his language—if the design of the gospel ministry thus embraces all the moral and spiritual interests of the faithful, till they are removed from earth to heaven, then is there no subject, which has a moral or religious bearing, which may not fitly be made the subject of discourse by a minister of Christ. Especially must it accord with the genius of that office which has for its object the cause of humanity and religion in the world, to dwell much upon the subject of christian charity, and to illustrate the particular methods in which that divine principle may be made practically subservient to the interests of miserable man. Nor is it easy to discover how this can be done,

to the utter contempt and oblivion of benevolent societies. Is the preacher allowed to enforce charity, but forbidden to specify how that charity may be exercised, and what objects it should embrace? Is truth to be taught in the abstract, while all its practical bearings are to be concealed, and the preacher commanded to observe, with respect to them, the silence of death?—This brings me to his

SECOND head of argument.—He lays it down as an axiom, that “Truth in the abstract, in her divinest form, is the only topic sufficiently dignified for the christian minister.” In other words, that when God designed, by the gospel ministry, to restore man to himself, he also designed to effect this by a simple statement of abstract truth; that to this annunciation of abstract truth, the office of the christian preacher is limited; and that to touch upon any collateral topics, to enter into any practical illustrations, to apply these abstractions to the tangible realities of life, is a profane degradation of the office. He means this, or he has employed phraseology, of the import of which he is ignorant. No man, pretending to reason, has ever proceeded upon an assumption more gratuitous, nor ventured to rest an important consequence upon grounds more liable to be contested. Instead of granting him this assumed dogma, as a legitimate principle, upon which he might fairly reason, your readers will naturally inquire, whether it has the sanction of revelation—the authority of the early church—or in any respect accords with the genius and spirit of Protestantism? Nothing of this kind is pretended; the history of the christian church leads to an opposite conclusion; nor is it difficult to expose the absurdity and danger wrapt up

in the principle which *Veritas* has made the basis of his extraordinary demonstration.

If “*truth in the abstract*” is the only thing that private christians are to be concerned for, the sentiment might be correct; but if that truth is to be embodied in the lives of the righteous, and presented to the world, not as a “*caput mortuum*” of cold abstractions, but as the animating soul of vital godliness; not as a faith without works, which is dead, but as the faith which purifies the heart, and “*worketh by love*”—then let the ministers of Christ, by advocating benevolent institutions, direct the streams of christian charity into those channels which shall convey health and fertility to the most desolate wastes of human life. The Apostles did this; nor did they deem it incompatible with their commission to “preach the gospel to every creature,” to make collections for the saints, with their own hands, to enforce them upon others, and to enter into the details of particular concerns, not dwelling upon the splendid sublimities of abstract truth, but applying it practically to the particular characters and circumstances of their own times. No man need tremble for his personal dignity, nor anticipate for a moment the degraded majesty of his office, who is treading in the steps of the primitive teachers. In proportion to the exactness with which we imitate them, shall we harmonize in our conduct with the designs of God. Topics which are discussed in their epistles will do no discredit to our sermons; nor shall we, if we have their spirit, imagine, with *Veritas*, that truth in the abstract appears in her divinest form;—we shall love her most when, clothed with charity, she walks abroad upon the face of the earth, in search of whom she may bless—

solacing with her tenderness, amid the desolations of solitude, the exile and the captive—soothing the anguish of the widow, and smiling away the orphan's tear—penetrating the dreary haunts to which misery has retired from the scorn of an unfeeling world—or is seen in the form of the angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth.

In public meetings, *Veritas* does not forbid the christian minister to plead the cause of any charity, although he protests against this being done in the pulpit. His reason for this is as strange as the distinction is fanciful. "Here ministers may speak with the utmost propriety, because they speak not as ministers, but as men." From what mysterious source did he obtain the information, that any man ceases to be a minister of the gospel, who has previously sustained that character, as soon as he rises to address a public assembly, in behalf of some cause of mercy? Or, by what puerility of superstition is he led to the belief, that it is the pulpit that entitles the ministers of religion to their office; what they utter there being rendered sacred by the sanctity of the place, and the same things becoming again profane when spoken elsewhere? Those of your reverend readers who are accustomed to frequent public meetings, to sanction, as ministers of the gospel, benevolent institutions, will be amused to learn, that, in future, they are to be recognized merely as private individuals, when they appear under such circumstances; while in the pulpit only they are invested with a sacred office. In the promiscuous assembly, they cease to be ministers; in the pulpit they cease to be men.

Truth is always simple, and all

its parts are in harmony with each other, while error is confused and contradictory. By this ingenious distinction of *the minister* and *the man*, *Veritas* has inadvertently undermined and demolished the whole fabric of his argument. According to his own showing, the single duty of the christian preacher is to announce abstract truth; there his functions commence, and there they end; whatever is extraneous to this, relating to practical topics which adventitiously arise out of the times, as it forms no part of his ministry, is, of course, uttered by the man, and not by the minister;—so that the minister and his office must remain clear of all contamination. Or, if *Veritas* means to assert, that the intrusion of the man *into the pulpit* violates the sanctity of that mysterious place, and thus degrades the ministerial office, he then exposes himself in another quarter: he can no longer maintain his position, that in public meetings it is "not the ministers who speak, but the men." For as the man and the minister, although distinct, can never be separated, it is clear, that if the presence of the man in the pulpit degrades the minister, the presence of the minister in the public meeting must consecrate the man. So that, in conclusion, according to *Veritas*, even in public meetings to which he had given them unrestricted access, the ministers of the gospel cannot speak without degrading their office. If they do not cease to be men *in* the pulpit, neither do they cease to be ministers *out* of it.

Veritas has employed but one solitary argument to illustrate his position, that the dignity of the pulpit cannot be supported but by abstract truth, and that it must be degraded by topics of practical benevolence. His argument is, that as the merit of

any particular benevolent society forms no part of abstract truth, but a subject of discussion open to diversity of sentiment, the minister of the gospel cannot pronounce on its excellence in the tone of an oracle, but must reason and plead as an advocate. The consequence of this will be, that the people, whose judgment is appealed to, will acquire a habit of thinking for themselves, of canvassing whatever sentiments are delivered from the pulpit, and of exercising at all times the function of critic and of judge. Allow me to quote his words. "Since they are the institutions of man, and only *one* mode of doing good, the people must be left at liberty to judge for themselves as to the propriety of lending their aid. Will these individuals, I would ask, be disposed to receive the message of God, by the same ministers, addressed in the same manner, with that profound reverence which belongs to a communication from Heaven? Is it possible that they can so immediately forget their capacity of judges, and resume again the character of little children, meekly to receive the ingrafted word, which is able to save their souls?" On inspecting this paragraph, your readers must have felt no common surprise that it should have been written by a protestant, and by one who reveres the christian ministry. Nor, I am persuaded, would *Veritas* himself, daring and adventurous as are some of his movements, have advanced to occupy this hazardous position, if he had been aware of the tremendous gulf beneath him; he would have retreated with eagerness, trembling at the recollection of his rash and precipitate enterprize. Is it not a duty prescribed to every christian, and a right claimed by every protestant, to take heed *how* he hears,

and *what* he hears? Disclaiming all pretensions to oracular infallibility, must not every christian minister of the protestant communion, say to his hearers, "I speak as unto wise men; *judge ye* what I say!" And does not this apply, not merely to subjects of a practical nature, such as relate to "the institutions of man," but with equal force to "abstract truth" itself? If people must be left at liberty to judge for themselves in the one instance, by what authority are they to be disfranchised of that liberty in the other, and compelled to receive, as the indubitable language of eternal truth, the statements, *however abstract*, of a fallible man? In either case their duty is the same,—they are to "search the scriptures, and see whether these things be so." The christian ministry, then, and only then, appears in its true grandeur, when it is instrumental in leading men to study the Bible, and do a rational homage to divine truth; and not when it is the object of blind veneration to vulgar superstition, and regarded as ultimate authority by an abject and infatuated people. The preacher is to be regarded with implicit deference, only so far as he is supposed to harmonize with the Bible, and of this every hearer must judge for himself. If no topics are to be touched upon in the pulpit, but such as exclude the possibility of diversified opinion, and can be announced with oracular decision, we are driven to the fearful necessity of resorting to an infallible ministry, and must retreat again into the bosom of the church of Rome;—or, declining to do this, the only remaining alternative is to explode commentaries and sermons, and confine ourselves to a bare reading of the word of God. This is the legitimate and inevitable conclusion to which we are brought by this paradoxical wri-

ter. We must again plunge into the vortex of superstition, and submit to the domination of the infallible church, or we must virtually abolish the ordinance of preaching altogether, and substitute in its stead a simple reading of the Bible. And this is to realize the purposes of Heaven in the institution of the ministry, and to rescue the pulpit from degradation !

On the whole, I will only add, that the reasoning of Veritas is altogether worthy of his propositions, and that it seldom fails to the lot of your readers, to meet with so long and unbroken a series of bold assumptions, substituted for legitimate proof. Happily, he has refuted himself; with the poison he has presented us the antidote; and the public mind will not do much homage to a writer, whose arguments, if they prove any thing at all, demonstrate, not that the pulpit has been degraded, but that it ought to be utterly destroyed. I am, Gentlemen,

Your's &c.

MARCUS.

A SERIES OF LETTERS ADDRESS-
ED TO A MEMBER OF THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND, ON THE
SUBJECT OF DISSENT.

Letter VI.

ON THE CEREMONIES OF THE CHURCH OF
ENGLAND.

My dear Friend :

In my last, I promised to review the ceremonies of your church, which I conceived would furnish me with additional reasons to justify my separation from her communion.

As the human mind is ever prone to substitute the external forms of religion for its internal and experimental power, great danger arises out of a departure from the primitive simplicity of public worship, and especially

CONG. MAG. NO. 22.

from loading it with pompous ceremonies, which invariably divert the attention from the object of worship, and fix it upon other things. No sooner was the church allied to the state, than ceremonies, of which the Evangelists and Apostles were entirely ignorant, began to be invented, and were introduced into the christian church. Two reasons are assigned for this presumed improvement of Christianity; the one is, that, as the church and state formed but one political constitution, consistency required that they should harmonize in their outward splendour; and that the state, which was decked with all possible grandeur, would be disgraced by being associated with a religion which was so simple and unadorned. The other reason is, that such ornaments would recommend christianity, and make its truths and its institutes, the more imposing to the senses, and the more palatable to the tastes of mankind. As these ceremonies were multiplied, christianity dwindled into popery, till, in less than a century, the glorious doctrines of the gospel were eclipsed, and the simplicity of its worship utterly abandoned.

At the Reformation, a powerful effort was made to disencumber the religion of the cross, by removing the mountains of useless ceremonies which preceding centuries had accumulated, and to present it to the world in its native glories; and much was done. But soon, alas! protestantism was established by acts of secular legislation; and being thus identified with the governments which patronized it, consequences, similar to those already named, again ensued. Soon, the reformed religion was established in England, and trappings were imported from Rome for the purpose of giving it *eclat*. These trappings your church still wears;

and, in consequence, she appears to the eye of truth an incongruous compound, half protestant, and half papist.

Though your church arrogates to herself the authority of **DECREEING** rites and ceremonies, yet I deny the legitimacy of her claim; and maintain, that it is an assumption of a power, anti-protestant, and which can belong to no being under heaven. But however unscriptural and inequitable such an authority, your church presumes upon the possession of it, and actually employs it, as an appeal to facts will clearly demonstrate. Allow me then to point out those ceremonies which are observed in the church of England, and observed in obedience to her assumed authority, for which she has no scripture warrant or precedent whatever.

One of these ceremonies is, *bowing toward the east*. --- This custom was recommended by Archbishop Laud's canons, and enforced by him with great severity. Your communion table, called an *altar*, is placed at the east end of the church. Upon this altar, the bread and the wine are set, when the Lord's supper is administered. Popery teaches that these elements are the real body and blood of Christ, which your church can scarcely be said to deny, while her catechism contains the following clause: "The thing signified in the Lord's supper is, the body and blood of Christ, which (body and blood of Christ) are *verily, and indeed taken and received by the faithful*." From the circumstance of the belief of the doctrine of transubstantiation, it is obvious why papists bow towards the east in their public worship; but why should your church continue to follow their example, seeing that she professes to disclaim the reason of it? Well might Arch-

bishop Usher say, "Although the gross idolatry of popery be taken away from among us, yet the corruption cleaveth still to the hearts of many, as may be seen in them that make courtesy to the chancel where the high altar stood."

Bowing at the name of Jesus is equally objectionable, though the practice has, in appearance, something more to justify it. But surely the expression, "At the name of Jesus every knee should bow," is not to be understood in a literal sense. Why should not the knee bow at the other names by which the Son of God is designated, as well as at this? Besides, if this passage is to be understood *literally*, why do the men bow the *head*, and not do as the women, who alone bow the *knee*? The literal translation of the words *επειποντες* is not *at* but *IN* the name of Jesus. Some say, indeed, that this ceremony is not enjoined by authority, but is only customary. But the fifty-second Injunction of Queen Elizabeth, published in the year 1559, is as follows: "It is to be necessarily received, that whenever the name of Jesus shall be in any lesson, sermon, or otherwise pronounced, that due reverence be made of all persons young and old, with lowliness of courtesy, and uncovering of heads of the mankind, as thereunto doth necessarily belong, and heretofore hath been accustomed." Why not as well bow when the name God, or Jehovah occurs; or when the names of the Father, and of the Holy Spirit, who possess an equality of nature, and an equality of claim upon our respect, with the Son, are pronounced?

I shall next notice the *sign of the cross* in the ordinance of baptism. This ceremony was first introduced in the fourth century, by a sect called *Basilians*, and is said to be done as a

token, that the person baptized "shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner against sin, the world, and the devil," &c. The use of this sign is enjoined both in the liturgy and in the canons of your church; so that it is made to constitute an essential part of the ordinance of baptism. But is there any authority for the practice in scripture? When the Redeemer instituted this ordinance, did he give any intimation of this ceremony? Whence then did it arise? Obviously from that source of error which has deluged the world with ignorance and superstition.

The various *gestures* which your church prescribes to be used by the worshippers during divine service, are also highly objectionable. The people are perpetually changing their positions, sometimes kneeling, sometimes standing, sometimes sitting. They are ordered to sit when the epistles are read, and to stand during the reading of the gospel, which is truly singular; and sometimes the minister is to be in a different position from the people. What is there, either in reason or scripture, to justify the church of England in solemnly *prescribing* and *requiring* such forms? The same authority enjoins *kneeling* at the time of receiving the Lord's supper. But was this either required by our Lord when he first instituted this ordinance, or enforced by apostolic example? certainly not. The disciples used the same posture in receiving it, as that in which they received their ordinary meals, that is, re-cumbent, or lying on beds round the table. This plainly intimates that it is to be received in the same posture as that in which we receive our common meals, which the best agrees with the idea of a feast. But when the Lord's table

was made an altar, and the bread and wine were converted into the real body and blood of Christ; then *kneeling* as an act of adoration of the elements began to be required, as the most suitable posture in which to partake of them. Thus one error makes way for another. The retention of the ceremony of adoration is tempting the ignorant still to believe the doctrine that gave rise to it, and is at best an unjustifiable tampering with superstition.

The objections which I have already expressed, are further confirmed and illustrated, by a reference to *sponsors in baptism* required by your church, but concerning which the scriptures are quite silent; to the ceremony of *confirmation*; to the employment of a variety of vests in different parts of public worship, sometimes the white surplice, at other times the black gown, &c. All these things prove that "ye are too superstitious," and plainly show, that your church is dissatisfied with the simple and unadorned mode of conducting public worship practised by Christ and his Apostles, and thinks herself capable of improving upon the institutions of infinite wisdom.

It is said that these things are allowable, because they are not forbidden by the authority of scripture. On this principle, the apostate church of Rome justifies herself in the introduction of the whole mummary of her superstitions; and, on this principle, rites and ceremonies, infinitely more ridiculous than even those of the Roman church, may be introduced. Besides, let me ask you, is it likely that Christ and his apostles should forbid things which were not known in their day? It will not convince me of the propriety of certain *things decreed*, that the scripture does not specifically condemn them. In introducing any thing into

public worship, if your church, or any other, wishes to be obeyed, she must show, that there is either a precept or a precedent for it in the sacred scriptures, or that it is fairly deducible from scripture premises. As the ceremonies to which I have adverted are not supported by the authority of the New Testament, but are the spurious DECREES of a church, arrogating to herself an authority which belongs to Jesus Christ alone, you cannot wonder that those who bow to no spiritual power but his, should refuse their homage, and object to the whole fabric of that church, which makes them the badge of her communion, and essential to her very being.

The same objections lie against the ceremony in your church which attends the introducing of persons into the ministerial office. I object to this service, not only because it is without scriptural example, but also because it contains things which are irreconcileable with the conduct of those who perform the office to which I refer. The bishop requires in ordaining priests and deacons, that they should declare themselves "inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost" to take upon themselves these offices, which all ought indeed to be; while at the same time, nothing can be more obvious in innumerable instances, than that these very persons, so ordained, are entire strangers to the "first principles of the oracles of God;" and that they are moved to take upon themselves this office, by the

love of filthy lucre, or the desire of an indolent and inglorious livelihood. You will admit that a considerable portion, if not a majority of your priests and your deacons, your rectors and your bishops, have entered your church under motives, distant enough from either love to Christ, or the souls of men; and to whom ordination is nothing more than a passport to glebes, and tithes, and preferments — the goodly land that flows with milk and honey. Facts, my dear friend, are stubborn things.

When a church becomes corrupt, she must throw around herself a false glare to engage the attention of the thoughtless multitude, and prevent them from viewing her deformities, and feeling disgusted with them. Such was the conduct of the church of Rome, and the church of England has too closely followed her example. The gazing crowd are easily imposed upon by the tinsel of religious forms, but those who think, unshackled by interest, and the prejudices of education, will not be so easily deceived. Such persons, adhering to that genuine protestant principle, that the Bible only is their religion, will think themselves fully justified in dissenting from a church, whose authority is despotism, and whose ceremonies are borrowed, not from the sacred scriptures, but the apostate hierarchy of Rome.

In a future letter, I shall state my objections against the discipline of your church; and remain,

Your sincere friend,
TROPHIMUS.

POETRY.

CONTENTMENT.

* TRUE RICHES! — where, oh! where do ye reside?
For if the whole that's under heaven
Were into my possession given,
I feel my heart would still be riven
With sighs of wants, and wishes unsupplied.'

Thus as I mourn'd, embittering the rod,
 Appear'd a more than mortal creature,
 Peace beaming from her ev'ry feature—
 'I'm call'd **CONTENT**,' she said, 'but, sweeter,
 Meek **RESIGNATION** to the will of God.
 'Untaught by me, true wealth must 'scape your eye;
 Golconda's mines—the gold of Ophir—
 Wit—Beauty—emptiness discover,
 Or bid some ~~new~~ desire hover
 O'er things forbidden, or which naught can buy.
 'Could'st thou the varied stores of knowledge boast—
 Through all the world's best pleasures wander—
 Of all its kingdoms be commander—
 Still would'st thou weep—like Alexander,
 When all possessing, discontented most.
 'He only has the prize with whom I'm found;
 Equal to all his need, his treasure,
 Or great or small, whate'er its measure;
 His very wants are springs of pleasure :—
To do the will of Heaven their utmost bound.
 'But I can only dwell where I can meet
 Humility, my elder sister ;
 (I flee the bosom that resist her ;)
 Seek her, then, where none e'er miss'd her,
 Attending meekly at Immanuel's feet.'

EPSILON.

A FATHER'S PRESENT TO HIS SON, WITH A WATCH.

MIGHT not some better name be found,
 To designate this useful toy ?
 It *watches* not, but just goes round ;
 To measure what it can't employ.
 He *watches*, who, each moment, brings
 The moment's duty as it flies,
 And hangs the trophy on its wings,
 E'er it rejoins its native skies.
 Th' eternal Ocean wets our shores
 By ev'ry moment's refluent wave ;
 Haste then ! and bring some useful stores
 To freight the flood you cannot save.
 Moments are pearls of countless worth,
 Passing along a knotless line ;
 What scatter'd millions since my birth
 Fill with regret this heart of mine !
 Their value then we first assay,
 When life has stript the vacant thread ;
 And sigh for treasures thrown away,
 When mingling with the timeless dead.
 When death's cold hand bedews the frame,
 And the pinch'd visage marks his prey ;
 When 'twixt both worlds life's dubious flame
 Hangs quivering o'er the prostrate clay.
 Ah ! then, dear child, with wishful eyes,
 Thou'l watch, if never yet before,
 When passing mercy's boundaries
 To rise or sink for evermore.
 To him, whose pitying eye surveys
 A wish too big for utterance here,
 Affection gives thy future days,
 With trembling hope and anxious fear.

MEDICUS.

REVIEW OF BOOKS, &c.

Pamphlets on the proposed union of Burghers and Anti-Burghers in Scotland.

1. *The Report of a Committee appointed by the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia, to prepare a Statement of means for promoting religion in the church, securing the permanence of the church, and enlarging its bounds. And also, the subsequent resolutions and arrangements of the Synod; with other documents on the proposed Union of the Secession in Scotland.* Glasgow, 1819.
2. *Observations on the proposed Union of Seceders in Scotland.* By a SECEDER. Edinburgh, 1819.
3. *Friendly Hints relative to the proposed Union between the Burghers and Anti-Burghers; suggested to the Parties.* By an OBSERVER. Glasgow, 1819.
4. *Act of the Magistrates and Council of the City of Glasgow, relative to the Burghers Oath.* Glasgow, 1819.

INNUMERABLE are the mischiefs and contentions which have been occasioned by suspending civil privileges on religious qualifications. The science of government has been burdened by provisions to guard the state from the encroachments of the church, and to secure the church from the invasion of its real or supposed enemies. The cares of statesmen have been increased, the patronage of the crown enlarged, and the sacred rights of subjects invaded, by the unnatural, unholly, and anti-Christian coalition of secular and spiritual power. None of the least of the evils resulting from this combination are Test and Corporation Acts; by which no real security has ever been gained for the dominant church, while perjuries, hypocrisies, jealousies, and heart-burnings, have been spread over the country. The effects which they are calculated to produce on religious and conscientious persons, are strikingly illustrated in the history of that division in the religious body in Scotland, which is now attempted to be healed.

The Presbyterian secession from the church of Scotland took place in 1732. It originally consisted of a small number, but gradually and progressively increased, till 1746, when a discussion arose respecting the lawfulness of the religious clause in the Burgess-oath administered in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Perth, and Stirling. This clause is as follows:—“Here I profess before God, that I confess and allow with my heart, the true religion presently professed within this realm, and authorized by the laws thereof. I shall abide thereat, and

defend the same to my life's end, renouncing the Roman religion called Papistry.”

At what precise period this clause was introduced, it is now impossible to trace. There can be no doubt that it was subsequently to the Reformation in 1560. Prior to that period, there is no vestige of a religious test; nor, indeed, from the universal prevalence, and consequent security of the Papal faith, could any have been deemed requisite. It was the sense of danger that first suggested, in 1557, what Knox called, “bands of defence, and maintenance of religion,” by which the superstitions of the church of Rome were formally renounced, and an adherence to the word of God was faithfully promised.

The religious clause of the Burgess-oath originated from the same source. Its exactation certainly proceeded from a conscientious sense of duty. From the terms of the Confession of Faith, ratified by Parliament in 1567, “the contraversiers of which, in any time hereafter, were to be punished according to the laws; and, particularly, from an Act of James the Sixth, in 1572, by which it is declared, “That none shall be reputed as loyal and faithful subjects to our sovereign lord, or his authority, but be punishable as rebels and gainstanders of the same, who shall not give their confession, and make their profession of the said true religion;” it was considered by our worthy ancestors, to be an exercise, not only of moral but political duty, to interpose their magisterial authority in aid of the existing laws, and to ingraft the religious obligation on the previous civil clauses of the oath. The sentiments of the age corresponded with the practice. The rights of private judgment were then in a great measure unknown. Uniformity was the idol, and liberty of conscience was sacrificed as the victim. The light of reformation had dawned on the country, but the shades of intolerance darkened its splendour. The worst feature of popery was retained, and the fetters of religious bondage were shaken off, only to be fastened on the vanquished. The persecuted became, in spirit, the persecutors; and the contest lay between two systems of faith, each struggling for ascendancy and establishment.

When the dispute arose about the lawfulness of this clause in the oath, it was alleged on the one hand, that it was merely opposed to Popery, and that all who were not Papists might lawfully take it. It was contended

on the other, that it included an express approbation of the existing established church, and, therefore, ought not to be taken by any who had renounced connexion with that body. On these grounds the parties divided, and became known by the designation of Burgher and Anti-burghers. Neither of them seems to have objected to the general principle of religious tests. They both maintained the propriety and scripturalness of the solemn league and covenant, professed their adherence to the constitution of the church of Scotland, not only as Presbyterian, but as united with the state; and would have been seriously offended to be considered Dissenters.

The breach at the beginning was a very violent one, and grew wider and wider for many years. Both bodies, however, continued to increase, and were the means of promoting orthodox doctrine in many parts of Scotland, where it would otherwise have been altogether unknown. At present above three hundred congregations belong to both synods, including, at a moderate computation, one hundred and twenty thousand persons.

The union of such a number of professors of christianity on proper principles, is obviously a very important affair. From all that has taken place, we think it extremely probable that it will be accomplished, and so far as it is conducted on christian principles, and is calculated to advance the interests of the gospel, we most sincerely bid it God speed.

The pamphlets now on our table do not contain much information respecting the societies, or their peculiar principles; but have all a bearing on the general object. The observations by a Seceder are evidently written *con amore*. Speaking of both classes, he says;—

"They all hold the same system of doctrines. That which is usually denominated the system of Calvin, and which is taught in the confession of the church of Scotland, and articles of the church of England, is universally held and preached. It may be affirmed with confidence, that there is not, in either branch of the secession, a Socinian or an Arian, an Arminian or a Pelagian. The divinity and atonement of the Saviour; the divinity and operations of the Holy Spirit; justification by faith in Christ; the depravity of man, and the necessity of a divine influence to the production of any thing good in his character, and excellent in his actions—are the doctrines to be heard from every pulpit. Every where, and on every sabbath, the purest practice is inculcated, and from the best principles."

We, of course, cannot oppose our limited personal knowledge to the strong

direct testimony of this writer. But before we could subscribe implicitly to his unqualified eulogium, we should request an answer to a plain question. Do the Seceders in Scotland educate for the ministry those only who have given evidence of being converted persons? Is it not their practice to bring up their children to the ministry as to any other profession? If this be the case, which we believe is undeniable, then, that all those so educated, should be men of God, who preach from the heart to the hearts of their hearers, would indeed be very marvelous. A form of sound doctrine may be subscribed, and a cold system of orthodoxy may be coldly preached, while little or nothing of the life of godliness exists. We feel anxious to state our mind on this important subject; as we are convinced that the education of nugatory men for the christian ministry has been the greatest injury ever done by christians to the church of God. It was one of the chief causes of the decline and ruin of the Presbyterian body in England. And, should a junction of the two leading bodies in Scotland take place—as the increase of their number will produce an increasing temptation to men to seek admission to the priest's office among them—if they do not change their system of nursing men for the altar—they may lay their account with sharing the same fate. As they would deprecate such a consummation, we would entreat them to take in time a hint from their friends. The Seceder goes on:—

"They hold the same system of government,—that system of Presbyterian parity which places all the ministers of religion on an equal footing; which guards alike against anarchy, and the encroachments of selfish ambition, and which secures the privileges of every member of the church, how weak or obscure soever he may be, while it preserves subordination among all. It is that system of government, not only in form, but in actual management, which distinguished the church of Scotland in her parent times, to which both branches of the secession look with respect and regard, as furnishing the model of their religious polity." p. 7.

For our part, we do not know that the church of England or Scotland was ever purer than at present; and we should have been happy to see some reference to the Bible, as containing a system of church polity deserving of respect, instead of this unmeaning and unscriptural deference to human authority. It is somewhat singular, that a system so perfect as the preceding paragraph supposes Presbytery to be, should have been found so unsuitable in England;—that, notwithstanding the extent in which it once existed, it is now scarcely known as a distinct profession.

We were prepared to hear this writer express the sentiments of himself and brethren respecting the alliance between church and state. We feel some anxiety to know how this part of the business is to be managed. The Anti-burghers, in their last testimony, have decidedly avowed themselves Dissenters; the Burghers have never done so. We trust the former will not recede; and that the latter will see the necessity of something more decided and consistent on this subject, than an ambiguous preamble, which has, after all, divided them. That they are all Dissenters, is matter of fact; that they should hesitate to avow it, is matter of surprise.

From this pamphlet, we make another extract:—

"There is the same discipline among Seceders. In particular societies, it is possible that there may be some slight varieties in the mode of administering this part of the duties of a church; but, with regard to the mode of discipline, its subjects, and its spiritual nature, there is not, certainly, any difference of opinion or practice. Its subjects are those, who, by certain violations of the divine law, have given offence to their christian brethren, and brought discredit on their profession; its end is, to reclaim those who have gone astray, and serve as a warning to others; it consists in admonition, in reproof, and in the temporary or total loss of religious privileges; it affects no man's bodily case; it affects no man's property or secular interests; it disclaims the use of civil pains to enforce spiritual authority. Such is the discipline, which is adopted in theory, and reduced to practice, among all Seceders." p. 7, 8.

The application of church discipline must depend, in a great measure, on the terms of original membership. If the evidence of genuine christianity is required, in order to fellowship, then every thing that injures or destroys that evidence, must endanger the privileges of the offender. But if a lower standard of membership is adopted, (and this, we fear, is the case, even among Seceders, if we may depend on the testimony of "The Word to the Wise," lately reviewed by us, the writer of which actually burlesques, in his own coarse style, the idea of visible saintship being the term of communion,) then a standard of discipline, proportionally diminished, must be brought into operation. This is another of the vital points which demands the attention of the two parties. The union of two dead bodies will never produce a living one; and the union of the living and the dead must produce something monstrous and unseemly. On this subject, the friendly hints of an Observer, whose opportunities of judging we know not, seem to deserve attention.

"The immediate object of these frank but friendly remarks," says this writer, "is to suggest the propriety, and to urge the necessity, of attention to certain radically important principles, with regard to the whole system of each party, either previous to, or in the act of their coming together, if they would prove a 'tabernacle which shall not be taken down,' and be considered by him 'who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks,' as a 'living temple of the Holy Ghost, a church of Jesus, and an house of God.'

"But while I have ventured, in the fidelity of friendship, to suggest my suspicions, I beg they may not be considered the fruit of disaffection, but of good will; neither as being intended to throw discredit on the christianity of all who are connected with these societies, I have no doubt, that not a few in each party are partakers of the true grace of God, and are heirs according to the hope of eternal life. But I must add, that if carnality of conversation, and conformity to the world, by following its course; if fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and being the companions of them who do so; if want of devotion of spirit and devotedness to God, are, unitedly or apart, evidences of being of the world, and not of God, then is it not undeniable, that, as constituted bodies, these societies seem to be made up chiefly (I by no means say wholly) of those who know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The mere statement of this seems sufficient to prove it to all those who, with enlightened minds, look at them through the glass of the word of God." p. 6, 7.

After noticing the account which the New Testament gives of Christians, and of the characters of those who ought to belong to a christian church, he proceeds:—

"If, according to the directions and descriptions of the New Testament, these are the features of those who should be welcomed, or ought to be suffered to unite in the sacred fellowship of the house and holy ordinances of the Lord of Glory; then, however awful and alarming the fact, may it not be affirmed, that such features are not to be found, in general, upon those societies; and may not their firmest friends be appealed to with confidence, whether it is not a fact, that no such appearances are inquired after; the actual possession of them is not an indispensable pre-requisite, either for first entrance, or future abode in them. And if this is the case, it is preposterous to expect another state of things, than that which really exists, and cannot but be evident to all who love and fear the Redemer." p. 8, 9.

On these remarks we only observe, that we fear so sensible and well-meaning a writer as this Observer seems to be, must have some good foundation for so pointed a statement as the above. Should he have carried his fears too far, still we think what he says is entitled to the solemn attention of the parties.

If his judgment be correct, it is very clear that some of the grand principles of christian union remain to be investigated by them, without attention to which, there may be a junction, but a solid christian union there cannot be.

Still we have no doubt good will arise from the present discussion and movement. Certain important principles must be brought into view. One thing we have remarked with pleasure; the active part which the people (did we speak as Independents, we should say the *brethren*) have taken in this business. It originated with them; and by them, we believe, in general, it is most heartily supported. We hope this will pave the way for such a change in the system, as that the parity, which is its boast, will extend a little farther than to its rulers; when the people will enjoy the privilege of assisting in the management of their own affairs, instead of occupying the humiliating attitude of petitioners, humbly praying spiritual courts to listen to their supplications. We beseech both clergy and laity of these professions to look at the New Testament, and see if they can find any thing like this in it.

Another good thing will result from this movement; an increased conviction of the impropriety and inutility of religious tests or qualifications for civil privileges. The magistrates of Glasgow, much to their honour, have abrogated the religious clause, and substituted, in its place, the following simple declaration:—

“These certify, that A. B., having paid his freedom fine, has been admitted a Burgess and Guildbrother of this Burgh, and is entitled to all the civil rights and privileges belonging to —, as by his acceptance hereof he becomes bound to perform all the civil duties by law incumbent on —, freeman citizen of Glasgow.”

This is just as it should be—“rendering to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and leaving to God the things that are God’s.” The oath, we believe, in all the Burghs, has long gone into disuse; it is now likely to be entirely abrogated. It is by slow and almost imperceptible degrees, that the cause of truth and of religious liberty gains ground. Every inch, however, is worth contending for; and that which is once properly gained, is not likely to be soon or easily lost. The props of superstition, the trammels of system, and the authority of names, are rapidly and successively giving way. The rubbish of fifteen centuries is clearing off from the temple of God; its foundations are made manifest; its godly proportions are beginning to appear; and ere long, we trust,

CONG. MAG. No. 22.

its length and breadth, and depth and height, will be displayed in all their grandeur and extent. Whether it be our lot to assist in removing the surrounding ruin, or in laying the stones, or only in forming the material of the heavenly edifice, blessed are our eyes, for they see, and our ears, for they hear, the things which many kings and righteous men desired to see and to hear, but were not permitted.

~~~~~

*Advice and Encouragement to Sunday-School Teachers. An Address delivered at the School-house connected with Hexton Academy Chapel, September 25th, 1818. By the Rev. William Harris, LL.D. Second Edition. London. 8vo. Hamilton, Paternoster-row. Price 1s. 6d.*

It is quite unnecessary, at a time like the present, to attempt a formal justification of Sunday-school instruction, since its importance and excellence are so generally admitted. Still there are some who would keep the human mind fast bound in the shackles of ignorance, though, for our consolation, this small number is gradually *decreasing*; and when knowledge, and especially sacred knowledge, shall have attained a wider diffusion, and men more universally shall be acquainted with its value, no voice shall then be raised against an object so truly excellent as that pursued by Sunday Schools.

It must be allowed, that, how important soever the religious instruction of the rising generation may be, much difficulty attends the means of its attainment. To train up a child in the way he should go, and to cherish within the youthful breast suitable feelings and dispositions, though an interesting employment, is, perhaps, one of the most difficult, which falls to the lot of man. We hail, therefore, with pleasure, every attempt to remove this difficulty, and facilitate the arduous employ. It affords us peculiar satisfaction, to see those who fill wide and important spheres of usefulness, and who have themselves made superior attainments, devoting a portion of their time to this laudable endeavour.—Among the numerous and excellent publications which have recently appeared, to assist in the proper conduct of Sunday-schools, the pamphlet before us deservedly holds a distinguished place. We are sincerely rejoiced, that the author has been induced to forego his intention of confining it to private circulation; and we join with him in the wish, that its more public distribution may promote “the important designs of Sabbath instruction.”

After having made some just and ex-

4 K

cellent remarks, in the introduction, on the kind and social temper which the religion of the Saviour produces, Dr. Harris distributes his address into the two heads of *advice* and *encouragement*. Under the *former* of these, he recommends teachers of Sunday-schools, to cultivate a sense of the nature and importance of their engagement; to maintain a spirit becoming their engagement; and to pursue measures worthy of their engagement. Under the *latter*, he reminds them, for their encouragement, that while employed in their work as Sunday-school teachers, they are plainly doing the will of God, and if under the influence of right dispositions, are secure of his approbation; that while endeavouring to benefit others, they are promoting religion in themselves; that their labours are not only of personal advantage, but have an important bearing on the state of society at large; and that they may be the means of saving souls.

Would our limits allow, it would afford us pleasure to follow the author through all the different parts of his address, and to give an outline of the general illustration. We cannot, however, pass over, in total silence, the remarks that occur under the division which refers to the *inducements*, generally employed, to stimulate youth in the attainment of knowledge. Having adverted to the ancient system of corporeal punishment employed for this purpose, and expressed his satisfaction that it has now grown into general disuse, he proceeds to deprecate another system, which, though very generally adopted, he regards as equally unsuitable.

"In revolting from that irrational and barbarous system many have, however, passed to the other extreme:—an extreme more apparently humane and dignified, but equally remote from christian principles. I allude to the common practice of exciting to greater attainments in learning, by the hope of pecuniary rewards, or by provoking personal emulation. This practice has effected much in facilitating the labours of teachers, and in accelerating the proficiency of learners. And it is likely to effect much, as long as human nature is depraved. The great question, however, is, what is it likely to effect in a moral point of view? Moral measures are to be regarded according to their evident tendencies. And the assertion may be advanced without hesitation, that, if to promote knowledge among the lower classes, we pervert the great principles of character, or sanction propensities awfully dear to depraved nature, we are doing irreparable injury where we intended certain good; we worry the maniac into a paroxysm, and at the same time place a weapon in his hands, to be used at the impulse of his disordered imagination. 'Knowledge is power'; and power without a good di-

rection is dangerous in proportion as it is great." p. 28, 29.

He then shows, at some length, the evil tendency of these measures. He proves, that "they clearly go upon the principle, that intellectual attainment is the best and highest aim of man";—that "while they thus emancipate knowledge from its lawful superior, they enslave it to vile propensities";—and, in short, "that these motives are anti-social, and imply the very opposite temper to that benevolent spirit which the gospel inculcates." He meets the argument which is brought in favour of rewards from the moral government of God, by showing, that

"God's rewards are proposed to moral excellency, not to intellectual superiority; to endeavours after good, not to success in its pursuit. His rewards are future, and encourage the expectation, rather than gratify the senses. They will be administered, not according to the comparative attainments of individuals among themselves, but by reference to a common standard, independent of all: hence they provoke no selfish or personal feeling among those who aspire after them. His rewards consist in the grand ends of existence, the attainment of which constitutes our real happiness and glory: hence, instead of diverting us from the appointed course, they uniformly attract us towards the perfection of our nature. Finally, we are constantly admonished, that his rewards are of grace, not of works; and that they are obtained, not by our unaided endeavours, but by strength graciously imparted from above: hence, while they stimulate to diligence, they administer no incitement to self-elevation and pride." p. 31, 32.

He then recommends, that, in the place of these ordinarily employed inducements, we should adopt the divine conduct as our pattern; and observes,—

"The motives proposed are simply such as these:—that the acquisition of useful knowledge, and the practice of what is learned, will render your pupils good, and therefore happy;—that such conduct will afford great pleasure to you, who are taking much pains to promote their welfare;—that it will acquire the friendship and esteem of all wise and pious persons, whose approbation alone they should covet:—that it will render them useful to society, in more ways than you can foresee;—that they are indebted to God for all their abilities, opportunities, and mercies;—that he constantly notices all they desire and do, and will call them to an account at death and in judgment for all:—that they have the greatest reason to fear him, because he is great and glorious; to love him, because he has given, beside the blessings of this life, his own Son for their salvation; and to trust in him for help implored by prayer, because he has promised his Holy Spirit to work in them the will and the power of fulfilling his good pleasure. The counterpart of these in-

documents will constitute your appeal to their fears." p. 33, 33.

We feel disposed to coincide, to a very considerable extent, with the author, in the judicious remarks which he makes, and the able reasoning he employs on this subject; though, perhaps, it may admit a doubt, in the minds of some, whether the reasoning will hold good to the extent to which the author would carry it. The subject is undoubtedly of great importance, and one in which every instructor of youth, whether in Sunday-schools, or otherwise, should feel himself deeply interested; and it will be well if this general allusion to the subject should induce those who have never yet seriously considered it, now to make it a matter of their diligent attention.

The extracts which have already been made must suffice as specimens of the author's style and manner. We do not hesitate to give this pamphlet our decided approbation; and we hope, that both on account of its intrinsic excellence, and the importance of the subjects on which it treats, it will obtain a very general circulation among the teachers in Sunday-schools.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Illustrations of the Holy Scriptures: in Three Parts. 1. From the Geography of the East. — 2. From the Natural History of the East. — 3. From the Customs of Ancient and Modern Nations. By the Rev. George Paxton, Professor of Theology, under the General Associate Syndic, Edinburgh. In 2 vols. 8vo. pp. 1230. Price 11. 6s. Edinburgh, 1819.*

FROM the vast variety of the matter contained in the Bible, opportunity is afforded for the exercise of various talents and acquirements in its illustration. The antiquity of the book, and the long period during which it was preserved by manual transcription, have occasioned much important labour to the critic in determining the age of its manuscripts, the value of their various readings, and the arrangement of its text. The languages in which it is composed have afforded scope for the fullest exercise of philological learning; while, to explain their idiom, and illustrate their beauties, the stores of oriental and of classical literature have been poured forth. Its facts have called out the energies of the historian and the chronologist; its antiquities have been explored by the lovers of ancient manners and traditions; and its natural history has employed the researches of the zoologist, the botanist, and the mineralogist. As of old, God raised up Bezaleel and Aholiab, and filled them

with the spirit of wisdom and understanding for the work of the tabernacle; so now, the manifestation of his spirit is given to every man, to profit the church of God by the elucidation of the oracles of eternal truth.

The subjects of biblical illustration are obviously of comparative importance, some of them have a more essential connexion with the understanding of the great plan of heaven in its doctrines, discoveries, laws and institutions, than others; and to every thing that bears on these subjects, we confess that we feel the strongest partiality. In other things, we feel interested as matters of taste, amusement, or curiosity,—and when these can be gratified without any great sacrifice of time or of principle, we know of no reasonable objection to the pursuit. The labours of those learned and ingenious men who have kindly stepped forward to aid us in these innocent gratifications, ought ever to be received with gratitude; and in so far as they throw light on any part of the word of God, ought to obtain our approbation. We have looked occasionally into Bochart, and have long been conversant with Shaw and Harmer,—and from all these writers we have derived both pleasure and profit. We promised ourselves the same from the work of Professor Paxton, and now that we have examined it, we are not disappointed.

In Mr. Paxton's views of the great design of revelation, as expressed in the following passage of his preface, we cordially agree:

"But the great and important amelioration in the sentiments and conduct of civil society, is the least part of the benefit which the scriptures bestow. They discover the real character of God, and of his rational creature; they describe the state of sin and misery into which we have fallen, and the wonderful method which infinite wisdom contrived for our deliverance—the obedience and death of the Son of God. The change which they produce in the unrenewed mind, is of incalculable value and of eternal duration; it cannot be described with more force and propriety than in the words of inspiration itself: 'The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.' While the noblest lessons of moral science are confined to the narrow span of human life, the word of God draws aside the veil which conceals a future state, and unfolds the final destinies of man; it points our hopes to enjoyments beyond the grave, commensurate with the vast desires and capacities of the glorified spirit, and durable as the nature and perfections of the Eternal; and our fears, to sufferings equally intense and permanent." preface, p. vi. vii.

The origin, progress, and design of the work are thus explained ;—

" The mind of the writer has been long impressed with the necessity and advantage of applying the physical and moral circumstances of the east, to the exposition of the Scriptures. He is well aware, that this mode of interpretation may be carried too far. A glowing imagination may suggest a relation between some text of Scripture and an oriental custom, where none actually exists ; but neither are the other methods of exposition exempt from danger. Critical acumen has but too frequently given a false view of the sacred text. It is readily granted, that an oriental phenomenon or custom ought not to invade the province of genuine criticism, abridge her legitimate rights, and supersede the due exercise of her powers. It is only when she fails to elicit the meaning of a passage by the usual methods, or when some obscurity remains after all her exertions, which she is unable to remove, that the biblical student may call for their assistance. They have a right to decide, only when the other is mute, and to perfect what the other has been compelled to leave unfinished. When oriental circumstances are kept within their proper sphere, and applied with judgment and caution, it is bumbly conceived they may be of great utility in expounding the Holy Scriptures.

" In this conviction, the author commenced a series of lectures on the subject, to the theological students under his charge, without the most remote idea of submitting them to the eye of the public. The rapid increase of the class, together with the number and variety of the exercises required by the General Synod from their students every session, soon rendered it inconvenient to continue them ; and it occurred to him, that, in this form, his prelections might still be useful to those for whom they were originally composed, and not unacceptable to the friends of the Bible in general.

" From the well-earned fame of his predecessors in this department of sacred literature, particularly of Mr. Harmer and Mr. Burder, he feels not the least inclination to detract ; on the contrary, he rejoices in their success, and in the approbation which their writings have obtained from a discerning public. Much as their learning and industry have accomplished, he still thought the subject was not exhausted, and that a better plan than either of them had followed, might be adopted. He has freely availed himself of their labours ; but not, he trusts, in a slavish manner. All the authorities quoted, as well by these writers, as by Mr. Taylor, in his edition of Calmet, which he had access to, have been carefully examined, besides a number of works which they have overlooked, or which have been published since they wrote. Claiming the same right to think for himself which he cordially allows to his neighbour, the writer has expressed his opinions freely, even when they happened to differ from their sentiments ; but he has never to his knowledge departed from the language of candour and respect.

" The only object which the author pro-

posed to himself in composing this work, was to illustrate the Holy Scriptures ; he has therefore uniformly and studiously rejected every particular in oriental geography, natural history, customs, and manners, how curious and interesting soever, that was not subservient to his design. His statements in all the three divisions may be deemed very defective ; and had he proposed to give a complete view of these important subjects, they would certainly have been so ; but they are sufficiently complete for his purpose. Nor did his plan admit of describing every place, or plant, or custom, whose name occurs, or to which allusion is made by the sacred writers ; it embraces those only that are connected with the exposition of some important passage, or that contribute to the general elucidation of the Scriptures. This will account for the numerous omissions, particularly under the heads of geography and natural history, which the intelligent reader will observe in his progress. preface, p. ix. x.

The nature of the work shows that it must be in a great degree a compilation, the value of which must depend on the labour bestowed in its researches, the judgment discovered in the application of their result, and the fidelity and accuracy of its explanations. In all these respects, we think it is entitled to a large measure of confidence and approbation. It discovers great patience of investigation, an extensive knowledge of the subjects on which it treats, and the most praise-worthy accuracy in its numerous and diversified descriptions. Less prolix than Bochart, and more systematic in its arrangement than Harmer, it contains much of what is useful in the former, and is better adapted to the general reader than the latter of these writers. To go over its plan minutely, or even to notice the greater number of its various subjects, is impossible in our limits ; but we shall devote a column or two of our pages to each of its three-fold divisions.

The first is occupied with " The Geography of the East," and is a part of the work in which less novelty of argument or illustration was to be expected than in the other two. In none of the works which we have consulted, have we found any satisfaction whatever in the attempt to determine the situation of " the garden of Eden, the land of Nod, the city of Enoch, or the mountains of Ararat." If the professor has failed where so many wights had failed before, and where success is perhaps impossible, it can be no disgrace. The waters of the deluge, and the obscurities of etymological interpretation, have involved these localities in a darkness from which we despair of their ever emerging. This despair however is unattended with much feeling of regret, as all the purposes for which the facts respecting

these places are recorded, may be accomplished without an accurate knowledge of their geographical positions. On Eden, our author justly remarks in conclusion.

" The primitive idea of the terrestrial paradise was long present to the imagination, and dear to the heart, of the oriental nations. It was the pattern of those curious gardens, which their nobles and princes caused to be fabricated of the most precious materials, and at a vast expense; the costly memorials of departed innocence. Such was that garden of pure gold, valued at five hundred talents, which Aristobulus, King of the Jews, presented to Pompey, and which the Roman General afterwards carried in triumph, and consecrated to Jupiter in the capitol. The garden of Eden seems also to have been the prototype of those gardens of delight, consecrated to Adonis, which the Assyrians and other nations in the east planted in earthen vessels, and silver baskets, in order to adorn their houses, and swell the pomp and splendour of their public processions. It furnished the enraptured poets of Greece and Rome with the never fading verdure, the perpetual bloom, and the fruits of burnished gold, with which their glowing imaginations clothed the fortunate Isles, or enriched the garden of the Hesperides." p. 18, 19.

We are surprised that Mr. Paxton did not add, that the Mosaic paradise furnishes the writers of the New Testament with some of the loveliest descriptions of that heavenly land, through which flows "the river of the water of life," on the banks of which grows that tree whose "fruit is for meat, and whose leaves are for the healing of the nations." From access to which, no "cherubim or flaming sword" debars; but of which all shall partake who are given to believe in the second Adam, and have the courage to overcome through the word of his testimony.

In the third chapter we have a long discussion respecting the land of Shinar, the city and tower of Babel, and the confusion of tongues. On the last subject, the following remarks are worthy of attention.

" It may be urged, that, by the testimony of Moses, the Lord confounded at Babel 'the language of all the earth.' But the plain of Shinar could, with no propriety, be called the whole earth; nor could the inhabitants of Shinar, by any figure of speech, be entitled to that name. If mankind were in possession of a great part of the globe when the tower was built, by what rule of justice could they be punished for a crime in which they had no share, and of which multitudes of the distant settlers could not even have heard? ' Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?' The truth of this history depends upon two terms, which admit of different senses. In the first verse

of the eleventh chapter of Genesis, the sacred historian says, ' the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. The word (כָּל) col, signifies the whole, and also every; by (כָּל) Arets, is often meant the earth, it also signifies a land or province; and occurs frequently in this latter acceptation. In this very chapter, the region of Shinar is called Arets Shinar, the land or province of Shinar; and the land of Canaan, Arets Canaan, the country of Canaan. The Psalmist uses both terms in precisely the same sense: ' Their sound is gone out into every land,' Col Arets. \* The words of Moses, then, ought to be rendered, Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of the whole land. If this view of the text be just, the dispersion was a partial event, and related chiefly to the sons of Cash, whose intention was to found a great, if not an universal empire; but by this judgment, their purpose was defeated. The language of the whole country, Mr. Bryant thinks, was confounded, by causing a labial failure, so that the people could not articulate. It was not an aberration, in words or language, but a failure and incapacity in labial utterance; for God said, ' Go to, let us go down and confound, פְּנֵבָל, their lip, that they may not understand one another's speech.' By this, their speech was confounded, but not altered; for, as soon as they separated, they recovered the true tenor of pronunciation; and the language of the earth continued for some ages nearly the same. This appears from many interviews between the Hebrews, and other nations, in which they spoke without an interpreter. Thus, when Abraham left his native country to sojourn in the land of promise, he conversed with the natives in their own language, without difficulty, though they were the descendants of Canaan, who, for his transgression at Babel, was driven by the divine judgments, from the chosen residence of his family. The Hebrew language, indeed, seems to have been the vernacular tongue of all the nations in those parts of the world; for the patriarchs, and their descendants so late as the days of Moses and Joshua, conversed familiarly with the inhabitants of Midian and Canaan, without the help of interpreters." p. 39, 40.

This paragraph contains part of a view of this extraordinary affair which we have long entertained. To us it appears that a difference of sentiment or opinion among the original projectors, rather than a confusion of languages, occasioned the dispersion at Babel. In confirmation of this, it deserves to be noticed that the Hebrew word פְּנֵבָל never signifies language or tongue as distinguished from other languages. This is the meaning of פְּנֵבָל which occurs in chap. x. 5—31. where various languages are evidently intended; but which is never

\* Ps. xix. 4.

employed in the narrative of the eleventh chapter. Hutchinson, Parkhurst, and other writers of the same school, suppose that it was a difference about religious worship that first dispersed the builders; but this arises from their considering the building of Babel entirely a religious project; viewing it more as an ambitious political scheme, to acquire celebrity and power, nothing more was necessary to blast it than dividing their counsels, and occasioning angry contentions respecting the ulterior object, and the best means of effecting it. This produced dispersion, and the dispersion gradually produced all the varieties of language and dialect that now prevail.

In the fourth chapter, on "The dispersion of mankind," we do not perceive any reference to the very valuable work of Michaelis's "Spicilegium, Geographiae Hebraeorum extensum post Bochartum." This is by far the most important work on the subject that has been published since the Phaleg of Bochart, and is necessary to supply the deficiencies and to correct the mistakes of that extended performance. Some of our readers will perhaps be gratified to know from Professor Paxton the branch of the Noahic family from which they themselves have sprung.

From the opposite shores of ancient Gaul, the Gomerians, or Cimbri, passed over into Britain; for it cannot be doubted that the British isles were peopled from the nearest points of the neighbouring coast. To prove beyond a doubt that the ancient Britons were the lineal descendants of Gomer, no other evidence need be produced, than the very names by which the Welsh continue to distinguish themselves from the rest of the nation: they call themselves Kumero or Cymro, and Kumeri; in like manner, they call a Welsh woman Kumeres, and their language Kumerseg. These are terms which exhibit an undeniably affinity to the primitive name of Gomer, and clearly prove their descent from that patriarch. The inhabitants of Cumberland also retain the name of their progenitor; they were at first called Cimbri or Cumbri, and afterwards Cambri; and Cumberland itself is the land of the Cumbri, Cimbri, or Gomerians.

But the Welsh, and the inhabitants of Cumberland, are not the only descendants of Gomer in the British isles. It is well known that the Saxons, and especially the Angles, were near neighbours to the Cimbri; and if it be admitted that Germany was peopled by the sons of Gomer, then the German tribes, the Saxons and Angles, who drove back the ancient Britons into the mountains of Wales, are branched from the same root, equally descended from the eldest son of Japhet." p. 53, 54.

From subjects more curious perhaps than useful, and on which the reasonings are often more ingenious than

satisfactory, Mr. Paxton passes on to those, which, affording ampler scope for investigation, present more interesting matter to the lover of biblical knowledge. The geography of Canaan has been a most fruitful subject of research to the traveller and to the critic. The land has been again explored from Dan to Beersheba, and as of old both a good and an evil report have been brought up respecting it. By one class of travellers it has been represented as the glory of all lands, and by another, as a land which "eats up its inhabitants." The truth, however, is now very generally understood, and the representations of Scripture are found to be fully supported by existing parts. The length and the breadth of the country have been measured, the altitude of its mountains ascertained, the extent of its rivers and streams traced out, the character of its climate determined, and its vegetable, mineral, and animal productions described. All these things afford our author topics of scriptural illustration, of which he frequently makes a very happy and judicious use. As one example, we select the following passage almost at random.

"The lofty summits of Lebanon were the chosen haunts of various beasts of prey; the prints of whose feet, Maundrell and his party observed in the snow. To these savage tenants of the deserts, the prophet Habakkuk seems to allude in that prediction: 'For the violence of Lebanon shall cover thee, and the spoil of beasts, which made them afraid, because of men's blood, and for the violence of the land.'\* The violence of Lebanon is a beautiful and energetic expression, denoting the ferocious animals that roam on its mountains, and lodge in its thickets; and that, occasionally descending into the plain in quest of prey, ravage the fold, or seize upon the unwary villager. To such dangers Solomon expressly refers, in the animated invitation which, in the name of the Redeemer, he addresses to the church: 'Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon; look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions' dens, and from the mountains of the leopards.'† With these fierce and ravenous animals, the prophet Jeremiah joins the wolves of the evening, and sends them to lay waste the habitations of his guilty and unrepenting nation: 'Wherefore a lion out of the forest shall slay them, and a wolf of the evening shall spoil them; a leopard shall watch over their cities, every one that goeth out thence shall be torn in pieces; because their transgressions are many, and their backslidings are increased.' Near the base of the mountains, the traveller is entertained with a more pleasing sight than the lion slumbering in his den, or the print of his feet in the snow; he sees the hart or the deer shooting

\* Hab. ii. 17. † Song iv. 17.

from the steep, to quench his thirst in the stream.\* It was when David wandered near the foot of Lebanon, driven by his unnatural son Absalom from Zion, and the fountain of Israel, the scenes of divine manifestation, that he marked the rapid course of these animals to the rivulets which descended from the sides of the mountains. He saw the hart panting for the water brooks, and the sight reminded him of his former enjoyments, while the circumstances of the creature bore a striking analogy to his own situation and feelings at the time. The passage, in which, prompted by the casual incident, he poured out the ardent longings of his soul for the water of life, is wonderfully beautiful and tender: 'As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?' † p. 134, 135.

There is a tendency in such passages as this to improve the spiritual feelings, as well as to enlighten the understanding of the reader. We are glad that the professor embraces every opportunity to give his inquiries this turn. Books of the kind now before us, are generally, and perhaps with too much justice, considered *dry*. This we apprehend is the strongest objection to the work of the industrious Harmer. It produces a kind of literary gratification, the tendency of which is more secularizing than we are disposed to approve of, when the Bible is the object. The design of that book is so entirely of a spiritual nature, that we ought to be exceedingly jealous of any work which gives a marked prominence to another view of it. It is so much easier to be critics on its language, and reasoners on its evidence, than to imbibe its spirit, and embody its doctrines in the life and conversation, that we cannot wonder natural men should often devote themselves to the former, while they entirely, or in a great measure, neglect the latter. We do not approve of that silly, injudicious practice to which some good men are too much attached, of allegorizing every incident, and bringing a mystery out of every circumstance. This is calculated to bring the word of God into contempt. But no less pernicious is the opposite mode of treating it. It presents indeed a greater parade of learning and taste, and produces the feeling of increasing knowledge of the scriptures, while it leaves the heart cold to the affecting discoveries of mercy, and indifferent to the exalted hopes of heavenly felicity. That knowledge of the Bible which is not likely to be of eternal importance, is comparatively of small importance. If eternity is to be

employed in the contemplation of the divine character and glory, as revealed through Jesus Christ; if the great bearings of the economy of redemption on the moral government of God, and the circumstances of rational beings are to be the chief objects of our future investigations; there is obviously but little connexion between these things, and the knowledge of the birds and the beasts of Judea; the modes of eating and drinking, marrying or burying its inhabitants; or even of the classical beauties and poetical charms of the written record of the relation. Heaven is the land, not of critics or philosophers, antiquaries or poets, but of saints, or redeemed sinners. What will it avail us to be acquainted with the whole circle of the sciences, if we are not wise to salvation? Suppose we can describe all the kinds and uses of the ancient sacrifices, all the articles of the temple furniture and service, and every tag and latchet of the high priest's dress; if we are not living by the faith of the great sacrifice, worshipping in the spiritual temple, and acquainted with the glory of the Great High Priest of our profession, what will it profit? We despise none of these things. On the contrary, we consider them all useful in their place. But we would wish to impress on the minds, both of writers and of readers, that their usefulness is entirely of an elementary or subordinate nature; and that it is only in subserviency to our higher and spiritual interests, that they are entitled to a portion of our attention. They are among the earthly things which shall be dissolved in the conflagration of our material abode; seeing which, what manner of persons ought we to be in holy conversation and godliness?

(To be continued.)

No Fiction: a Narrative founded on recent and interesting Facts. In 2 vols. 8vo. pp. 660.

WORKS of fiction, composed with the plausible and praise-worthy design of conveying religious truth to those who refuse to contemplate it in its more abstract form, have of late years considerably multiplied upon us. We are far from congratulating ourselves upon this account, because we are convinced that the class of persons whom these works are chiefly intended to benefit, namely, novelists, and sentimental readers, are least likely to be interested by them; and that, with respect to others, the habit into which they bring the mind of conversing with ideal and fictitious personages, tends very much to

\* Maundrell's Travels. † Psalm xliii. 1.

unfit it for being impressed with the truth and reality of the sentiments they are made to enunciate. The justification attempted to be derived for these works, from the parabolic representations of our Lord, appears to us to be very insufficient. Many of these representations are pure allegory, where one meaning is obviously to be substituted for another to which it is analogous, where the mind is pleased with making the discovery of the resemblance, and where the truth so discovered is more likely, from the attention it has employed, to be tenaciously and lastingly retained. In those parables which are not allegorical, the fiction is so slight, and the imaginary persons are conversed with for so brief a period, as entirely to prevent the deleterious effect to which we have adverted. Thus far, then, theory is against these works, and fact, if appealed to, would, we have no doubt, corroborate our conclusion respecting their slight utility, and the little permanent interest they are calculated to produce. Already, most of the *religious novels* that have appeared, have found their way to the unvisited shelf, and, in a little time, we doubt not, those few, the names of whose authors have decked them with an adventitious importance, will be quietly laid by their sides. Even Celebs himself, as well as the numerous host of his imitators, will repose in lasting obscurity, and be thought of no more.

It is not our intention, by these remarks, to depreciate the volumes before us. Their title sufficiently repels the objection to which we have alluded. But it must not be imagined from this title that the work is a dry and meagre detail of facts. There is much of the colouring of fancy both in the several scenes it describes, and particularly in the vivid and touching descriptions of nature with which it abounds. To these we are not fastidious enough to object, especially when introduced, as here, for purposes truly excellent. The writer is evidently one who has looked into the world of nature for himself, and that not merely with a sentimental, but a devotional eye. From "the things that are made," his transitions are as easy as they are just to the "invisible things," of him who is their great Former and Preserver. Hence we survey his gentle declivities, his enamelled meadows, his silvery streams, presented as they are in fanciful combination, not only without being wearied, but with the purest satisfaction and delight. But there is such an air of credibility about the narrative itself, as easily obtains for it the belief that the personages whom it introduces are not imaginary but real beings, and that the events it

records belong not to the ideal, but to the present course and tangible world. This belief is strengthened by allusions to several recent occurrences of a public nature, and by the mention of some well known places in the vicinity of London, and in distant parts of the country. There is, too, so clear a development of human nature, and such an exact delineation of the workings of the human heart, in different situations, and under different circumstances, as cannot fail to render these volumes peculiarly interesting. The writer, be he whom he may, was unquestionably more than an eye witness of what he describes, and may doubtless say of the transactions he records, *quorum pars magna fui*.

The following is a brief outline of the history. Lefevre, the hero of the piece, is a young man sustaining a situation in one of the public offices of the metropolis; of ardent passions, of great openness of behaviour, and of strong and powerful religious impressions. At an early period, he forms an acquaintance, which soon ripens into friendship, with another young man of the name of Douglas, whose judicious counsels and maturer piety afford the happiest influence in the formation of his character. The progress of their friendship, with its little interruptions and revivals, is exceedingly well delineated. In a few years, however, the friends become separated by the removal of Douglas from town for a great part of every year, and Lefevre loses one whose company had been a guard to him against all the inducements to worldly society, and in whose presence he had ever found an incentive to useful and virtuous pursuits. It is now that Wallis, a base and worthless, but fascinating and gentle young man, in the same office with Lefevre, employs all his arts to recover his former influence over him, which Douglas had usurped, and to make him again a man of the world. In this plan, unhappily, he too well succeeds: and the insidious methods he employs, together with their insidious operations in sapping and undermining the religious character of Lefevre, are pourtrayed with great truth and fidelity. At length by a process, imperceptible, but we fear too frequently realized, Lefevre, notwithstanding the remonstrances he occasionally receives from the letters and visits of Douglas, and the still more affecting and goading reproaches of his own conscience, becomes transformed into a gay, and extravagant, and dissipated man of the world.

We insert a picture of the state of his mind at this period.

"But, while Lefevre was making his conduct plausible to others, and in some de-

gress even to himself, he was really proceeding with accelerated steps in the path of ruin. The restraints arising from his connexion with Douglas and the Russells appeared to be his only preservative, and now these were cast off, he seemed like a vessel severed from her last anchor,—a prey to the merciless influence of the passions. His high spirit, made fiery and ungovernable by excesses, knew no control from those low and selfish considerations which keep many from the extremes of vice, who yet have no sense of moral virtue. He felt, without allowing it, that the steps he had already taken were daring and desperate; and his mind took the colour of his situation. He had passed through several gradations of iniquity, and he was still dissatisfied and unhappy; he, therefore, resolved to make an experiment on those that remained.

"From having been tempted, Lefevre now became the tempter of others. Many of his companions, whose conduct he had formerly reprobated, were soon deserted as 'poor spiritless fellows'; while a few, partaking of his own temper, and bound to him by his false generosity, were ready to countenance his measures. With this knot of iniquity, he associated for nearly two years, corrupting and being corrupted. From having imbibed a taste for mixed liquors, he became partial to them in a pure state; and from having used them freely in the close of the day, he had recourse to the morning dram. An attendance on the theatre opened an easy passage to the brothel; he listened to the voice of strange women, and was taken in their snares. He ran, in short, the whole circle of vice; determined, in the first place, to find, if practicable, enjoyment; and, should this be impossible, to drown care and inquietude. Religion, and the concerns of religion, were all this time put as far as possible from his thoughts. He was resolved, since he could not bring his mind to say, with the atheist, 'there is no God,' to *forget* that there is any!

"The round of carnal pleasure is, however, soon run. The world, with all her pretensions, has but little variety for her votaries; and, wanting variety, her favours pall upon the appetite. Lefevre had now accomplished his purpose—he had left himself no new, no 'unbroached delight.' He had passed from the doubtful to the impropriety, from the improper to the vicious—from the vicious to the flagrant—and had neither 'found enjoyment, nor drowned care.' He had foolishly thought, that the restraint of his inclinations was a hindrance to his happiness; he had now given the reigns to his appetites and passions, and found himself more miserable than he could have thought it possible to be! He would not believe that the increase of misery was in exact proportion to the progress of sin; but the terrible truth was now written on his conscience. His intemperance had broken his spirits, and inflamed his temper. An unsatiable fermented in his bosom; and an indescribable gloom existed between him and every object on which he looked. His companions, from like causes, participated in the same effects; and from having been accomplices in wickedness, they now, not

unfrequently, became each other's tormentors.

"One evening Lefevre returned to his home at an early hour, and but little affected by liquor. He had differed with one of his companions on some trifles of politics, who, not being so well in the possession of his senses, had insulted him, and Lefevre left the place. He found himself in his room disengaged and alone, and the idea alarmed him. His heart was filled with anguish and resentment at the conduct of his friend; he had long despised himself, but he could not brook the contempt of others. His emotions opened a most unwelcome view of his past folly and guilt. He felt that although he had found nothing in the world, he had nothing to hope from it, as he had already tried all it had to offer. His thoughts reverted to days long gone by. The names of his mother, Douglas, religion, and God, crossed his recollections! He shut his eyes—started from his seat, and the room, as if shunning their presence—he could not endure to think of those injured names! His mind became exceedingly agitated. He condemned himself—cursed his being—flew to a stupefying draught—and threw himself on his bed, to seek a temporary annihilation, which, at that moment, he would willingly have made eternal!" p. 323—326. vol. i.

The history of Lefevre becomes now much more eventful. His extravagancies plunge him into numerous and painful embarrassments, and he has frequent recourse to the fatal bottle for the purpose of drowning his uneasy reflections. A letter which he receives at this time from Douglas, full of tender but piercing remonstrances, induces him, with a view of getting rid of these remonstrances, to renounce his friendship. One only resource seems to be left him. An attachment which he has formed for an amiable and virtuous female at Seven Oaks, promises to recover him from his evil habits, and to fix him again in those of virtue. He presses the appointment of a day for their union, but just as he is on the point of obtaining his wishes, he has the mortification to find, that a discovery has been made to her of his former dissoluteness, and that, with commendable fortitude, though not without a considerable and painful struggle in her own mind, she resolutely declines the union. Driven to desperation, he becomes delirious, and his last hours seem to be approaching. Dreadful are his ravings, in the midst of his friends, who have been sent for to console him in his agonies.

"Mr. Douglas came in. All his former feelings were revived. He stood over the bed pensive and prayerful, restraining the violence of his actions, and watching an opportunity of addressing him.

"Lefevre had, from exhaustion, been silent a few minutes. He began again exclaiming, at intervals: 'Mary! Mary! but you won't listen to me; no—you rejected

me; cast me off—cruel Mary! yet you did weep, I remember you did; but it's easy to weep. I should like to weep—but I can't, (passing his hand over his fiery eye-balls)—and yet my heart's very sad, very sad indeed!—I told you if you left me, I should fall, and now I am fallen low enough, a'n't I? I shall never get up again. Perhaps you'll pity me now—don't you think you'll have to answer for all this?—But I won't accuse you!—Why—it is all my own fault—I should have kept as I was—not forsaken my God—not despised my Saviour.—O Douglas, why did I did I leave you!—Those base fellows led me away!—Ah! Douglas, you should not have let me go—indeed, you should not—

“He paused and seemed coming to himself.

“Charles!” said Douglas.

“He looked towards him.—‘Don’t you know me,’ Douglas continued.

“‘No Sir,—I don’t know you—I have been very ill—and very wretched!—I have seen strange things!—I told Douglas, and he said he’d come and talk with me.’

“‘Well, I am Douglas. I have come to talk with you. Don’t you know me, Charles?’

“Recovered by the sound of his voice, and passing his eye-lids over his eyes to clear his sight and recollection, he exclaimed—‘Yes, you are Douglas!’

“‘Yes—and I am your friend, and wish to comfort you.’

“‘Comfort me!—Ah! you cannot! nobody can comfort me!—You ought not to come to me. How I have abused you—Injured you—don’t you remember, what I told you?’

“‘I do,—and from my heart, Charles, I forgive you that and every thing else, you may think you have done against me.’

“‘Ah! you forgive me—you were always kind—but I cannot forgive myself—and God will never forgive me!’

“‘O yes he will!—He is waiting to be gracious.’

“‘Ah! but not to me—not to me!—

“‘Yes, to you, Charles!—Was he not gracious to Saul of Tarsus, a persecutor and blasphemer—the chief of sinners?’

“‘Ah, I am worse than he—I am the very chief of sinners. Consider, I am a backslider, that’s the worst of all characters!’

“‘But yet the backslider may be pardoned.—Was not the apostatizing Peter pardoned?’

“‘His sins were not like mine.’—

“‘But God assures us he will heal our backslidings—that though our sins are as crimson and scarlet, they shall be white as snow.’

“‘Yes, that’s all true, I believe—but I am an exception—who is like me? Do not flatter me, Douglas. My condemnation is sealed here, (laying his hand on his breast.)—Consider what mercies I have abused—what privileges I have neglected—what convictions I have stifled—what sins I have committed.’—

“‘For the world, my dear Charles, I would not flatter you. I do consider your sins, and all their aggravations; and, while I consider them, I most deliberately assure

you, that they do not put you beyond the reach of mercy. No—though you had committed even more sins than you have, there would be the fullest encouragement to flee to the Saviour! His blood cleanses from *all* sin. We are not condemned because we have sinned beyond the efficacy of the atonement; but, because by impenitence and unbelief, we cut ourselves off from its virtue. I know, more than any one, of what you have been guilty, but I think you are now committing the greatest sin in your life, by rejecting in despair the remedy.’

“Lefevre was silent and thoughtful.

“‘Look to Mount Calvary,’ said Douglas, ‘look to the cross of Jesus,—there hangs all our hope.’

“‘O name it not,’ he cried, ‘that goes to my very soul! O, how have I abused, mocked, and crucified the Saviour of sinners; but for this, there might have been some hope! It is just—I have forsaken him—*I will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh—think of that!*’

“He paused, and was getting more composed; Wallis and his uncle came into the room, but he did not distinguish them. He looked round with wildness, and continued at intervals—

“‘Lost, lost, for ever lost! O I have forsaken my God; he called, but I would not hear; he stretched out his hand, but I rejected it—*think of that!* See, how his broad eye frowns upon me! O hide me, hide me from the wrath of the Lamb! Cruel Douglas, to tell me to look to the cross! any thing but that.’

\*\*\*\*\*

“‘O how I burn! Pour some water over me here, (running his hand over his bosom,) unquenchable fire—*think of that!* a worm that dieth not; if it would but die! Death is nothing, but it’s what comes after death—dreadful—dreadful!’

\*\*\*\*\*

“‘Mind, I tell you, take care of sin; it’s a nasty, bloody thing. If it stains your conscience, you’ll never get it off; I trifled with it, and I shall never be clean again. Take care of sin; God won’t forgive you else. O he is very good and merciful; very, very; but then he’s *just*—he’s *just*—*think of that!* O I have forsaken my God—I have forsaken my God.’

“Lefevre groaned heavily, as he terminated these and some similar exclamations, and looked round on the objects in the chamber, with that ‘speculation in his eyes,’ which denoted the return of the mind to his senses. Wallis, and Lefevre’s uncle, gazed on each other.

“‘Poor fellow! this is only what might have been expected,’ said Wallis, veiling his sentiments in ambiguous words, lest Douglas should correct him.

“‘Expected, indeed,’ said the uncle, ‘this is what I always thought his over-righteous ways would come to! I told him it would never hold long; and if it did, it would be sure to turn his brain. You see my words are true. It’s all his religion—that’s a clear case.’

“Lefevre sprung hastily in his bed, as the last sentence caught his ear, and exclaimed, ‘All my religion, sir! O, is the

just punishment of my sins to be imputed to religion? No, sir, it is all for the want of religion, that you see me thus! I neglected— despised that religion which you awfully blaspheme; this makes me wither and perish, as you see, under the curse of Almighty God!

" Well, don't discompose yourself, Lefevre," said Wallis, stepping up to him. He had not distinctly observed his presence. He turned a piercing eye upon him, which spoke to his soul; his tongue faltered a moment, and then he said, "O, Wallis, you have ruined me! How can I look at you? Yes—you have not gone the lengths I have; but you *first* led me astray—*first* brought me to base company! O I never was unhappy till I knew you! Yet it was all my own fault—I knew better."

" Wallis endeavoured to cover his awkwardness, under this address, by assuming an air of indifference.

" Lefevre's quick eye, still searching his countenance, observed it. ' O Wallis,' said he, ' attend to me! I have little to say in this world! There is hope for you. Doubt not the truth of religion. I tried to doubt, but I don't doubt now. I *feel* there is a God, whom I have offended. I *feel* there is a heaven I have lost. I *feel* there is a hell—I have the witness here, (striking his breast.) O do not trifl as I have done—as you have done; renounce the world—fly to the Saviour. Brave not the terrors of God. I could brave more than you—but see what I am. The finger of God crushes me like a moth. O 'tis a terrible thing to fall in to the hands of the living God!" p. 85—91. vol. ii.

We have not time to pursue the remainder of the narrative. Suffice it to say, that Lefevre recovers from this state, wanders away from home, enlists himself as a private soldier, quits his native country, becomes thoughtful on the voyage, and, after passing through various and deeply interesting scenes, returns home, a confirmed penitent, and a recovered backslider.

We regret that we have not room for further extracts. We should have felt

great pleasure, had our limits allowed, in transcribing the cottage scene at Bagshot Heath, which, we think, does great credit to the author's powers of discrimination. Our readers will judge for themselves, from the outline, and the extracts we have given, of the style and the tendency of the narrative; but we confess, for our own parts, that we have not been able to resist in many places the pathos of the author, and that, if we do not give him credit for possessing the highest order of talent, we must acknowledge his skill in moving the affections. He dives to the springs of human thought. He dissects the heart, and lays open to us its inmost workings. With a preference to the established church, he evinces considerable candour and liberality. His doctrinal views are what are generally termed orthodox, and, what we believe, to be scriptural. If we have any thing to object to, it is to the numerous letters which appear in the volumes, and to the pieces of poetry which are, certainly, common place. There is too a wildness and improbability about some of the events, which give them the appearance of being introduced for effect. But the author's motto must be his apology for this; *Le vrai n'est pas toujours vraisemblable*. With these slight and trivial deductions, we commend the volumes to our youthful readers especially, hoping that a perusal of the ways in which Lefevre was seduced, will put them on their guard against the specious coverings over the "pitfalls of vice;" or that, if they have begun to go astray, they will be led, from the apparent desperation of his case, and from the woes that at length became necessary for his recovery, not to delay their return; but, by a vigorous resolution, under the aid of divine grace, to break from the snares in which they have been taken.

## LITERARY INFORMATION, EXTRACTS FROM SCARCE BOOKS, ANECDOTES, &c. &c.

### *The Credulity and Weakness of the Early Fathers.*

THE celebrated Irenaeus affirms, that "our Saviour lived to an old age, or was fifty years old, at the least, at the time of his crucifixion;" which he attempts to prove, first, from the reason of the thing; "that as Christ came to save all men, of all ranks and degrees, so it was necessary, that he should pass through all the several stages of life, that he might be a pattern to them all: secondly, from the unanimous tradition and positive

testimony of all the old men who had lived with St. John, and the other Apostles, from whom," he says, "they all received this account, and constantly bore witness to the truth of it." Yet this unanimous tradition, so solemnly vouch'd by this venerable Father, is as certainly false, as the Gospels are true. Dr. Whitby, after he has produced this same passage, cries out, as it were, with astonishment,—"Behold here, according to Irenaeus, how all the Elders of Asia testify, with one voice, that they had received from St. John, and the

other Apostles, a tradition concerning a fact manifestly false! Behold, an apostolic man, professing to prove, from St. John's Gospel, things not only contradictory to that Gospel, but to the articles of our creed!" &c.

The learned Cave, also, in his *Life of Irenaeus*, tells us, "that he was betrayed into this error, partly from a mistaken report, which he had somewhere picked up, (and it may be from his master Papias,) and partly out of opposition to his adversaries, who maintained, that our Saviour staid no longer upon earth, than till the thirty-first year of his age; against whom the eagerness of disputation tempted him to make good his assertion from any plausible pretence," &c.

He asserts, likewise, the doctrine of the Millennium, in the grossest sense of it, from the same authority of a tradition, handed down to him by all the old men who had conversed with St. John, and heard him relate, what our Saviour himself used to teach concerning it: of which he has recorded the following passage: — "The days will come, in which there shall grow vineyards, having each ten thousand vine stocks; and each stock ten thousand branches; each branch, ten thousand shoots; each shoot, ten thousand bunches; each bunch, ten thousand grapes; and each grape squeezed, shall yield twenty-five measures of wine: and when any of the saints shall go to pluck a bunch, another bunch will cry out, I am a better—take me, and bless the Lord through me. In like manner, a grain of wheat sown, shall bear ten thousand stalks; each stalk, ten thousand grains; and each grain, ten thousand pounds of the finest flour: and so all other fruits, seeds, and herbs, in the same proportion, &c. These words," says he, "Papias, a disciple of St. John, and companion of Polycarp, an ancient man, testifies in writing, in his fourth book, and adds, that they are credible to those who believe."

#### *Historical Illustrations of Catholic Saintship.*

"It is certain that, in the earlier ages of christianity, the christians often made free with the sepulchral stones of heathen monuments, which being ready cut to their hands, they converted to their own use; and turning downward the side on which the old epitaph was engraved, used either to inscribe a new one on the other side, or leave it, perhaps, without any inscription at all. This has frequently been the occasion of ascribing *martyrdom* and *saintship* to persons and names of mere heathens.

"Mabillon gives a remarkable in-

stance of it in an old stone found on the grave of a christian, with this inscription: —

D. M.  
JVLIA EVOVIA  
FILIA FECIT  
MATRI.

"And because, in the same grave, there was found likewise a glass vial, or lachrymatory vessel, tinged with a reddish colour, which they call blood, and look upon as a certain proof of martyrdom, this Julia Evodia, though undoubtedly a heathen, was presently adopted both for saint and martyr, on the authority of an inscription, that appears evidently to have been one of those above-mentioned, and borrowed from a heathen sepulchre. But whatever the party there buried might have been, whether heathen or christian; it is certain, however, that it could not be Evodia herself, but her mother only, whose name is not there signified.

The Spaniards, it seems, have a saint, held in great reverence in some parts of Spain, called Viar; for the farther encouragement of whose worship, they solicited the Pope to grant some special indulgencies to his altars; and upon the Pope's desiring to be better acquainted, first, with his character, and the proofs which they had of his saintship, they produced a stone with these antique letters, S. VIAR., which the antiquaries readily saw to be a small fragment of some old Roman inscription, in memory of one, who had been Praefectus 8 VIAR um, or overseer of the highways.

"But we have, in England, an instance still more ridiculous, of a fictitious saintship, in the case of a certain saint, called Amphibolus; who, according to our Monkish historians, was Bishop of the Isle of Man, and fellow-martyr and disciple of St. Alban: yet the learned Bishop Usher has given good reasons to convince us, that he owes the honour of his saintship to a mistaken passage in the old acts or legends of St. Alban, where the Amphibolus mentioned, and since reverenced as a saint and martyr, was nothing more than the cloak which Alban happened to have at the time of his execution; being a word derived from the Greek, and signifying a rough shaggy cloak, which ecclesiastical persons usually wore in that age.

"They pretend to show us here, at Rome, two original impressions of our Saviour's face, on two different handkerchiefs; the one, sent a present by himself to Agbarus, prince of Edessa, who, by letter, had desired a picture of him; the other, given by him, at the time of his execution, to a saint, or holy woman, named Veronica, upon a hand-

kerchief, which she had lent him to wipe his face on that occasion: both which handkerchiefs are still preserved, as they affirm, and now kept with the utmost reverence; the first, in St. Silvester's church; the second, in St. Peter's; where, in honour of this sacred relique, there is a fine altar, built by Pope Urban the Eighth, with the statue of Veronica herself, with the following inscription:—

**SALVATORIS IMAGINEM VERO-  
 NICE  
 SVDARIO EXCEPTAM.  
 VT LOCI MAJESTAS DECENTER  
 CVSTODIRET URBANVS VIII.  
 PONT. MAX.  
 MARMOREVM SIGNVM  
 ET ALTARE ADDIDIT CONDI-  
 TORIVM  
 EXTRVXIT ET ORNAVIT.**

But notwithstanding the authority of this Pope, and his inscription, this **VERONICA**, as one of their best authors has shown, like Amphibolus before-mentioned, was not any real person, but the name given to the picture itself by the old writers, who mention it; being formed by blundering and confounding the words **VERA ICÓN**, or true image, the title inscribed, perhaps, or given originally to the handkerchief, by the first contrivers of the imposture.

“These stories, however, as fabulous and childish as they appear to men of sense, are yet urged by grave authors, in defence of their image-worship, as certain proofs of its divine origin, and sufficient to confound all the impious opposers of it.” — *Middleton's Letters from Rome.*

*Anecdote of the late Rev. John Newton.*  
Two or three years before the death of this eminent servant of Christ, when his sight was become so dim, that he was no longer able to read, an aged friend

and brother in the ministry, now living, called on him to breakfast. Family prayer succeeding, the portion of scripture for the day was read to him. It was taken out of Bogatzky's **Golden Treasury**: “By the grace of God, I am what I am.” It was the pious man's custom on these occasions, to make a short familiar exposition on the passage read. After the reading of this text, he paused for some moments, and then uttered the following affecting soliloquy:—“I am not what I ought to be! Ah! how imperfect and deficient!—I am not what I wish to be! I ‘abhor what is evil,’ and I would ‘cleave to what is good’!—I am not what I *hope* to be!—Soon, soon, I shall put off mortality; and with mortality all sin and imperfection! Yet, though I am not what I *ought* to be, nor what I *wish* to be, nor what I *hope* to be, I can truly say, I am not what I *once* was—a slave to sin and Satan; and I can heartily join with the apostle, and acknowledge; *By the grace of God, I am what I am!* Let us pray!”

#### *Literary Intelligence.—Russia.*

At Neutscheresk, the chief town of the Don Cossacks, the Hetman, Andrew Denisow, has instituted a society for purposes of instruction and amusement. The reading of journals and other periodical works, whether in foreign languages, or in the Russian, forms the principal object of the members of this society, who are principally officers and nobles.

#### *Literature in Egypt.*

A FOREIGN journal states, that the Pasha of Egypt has procured from 5000 to 6000 volumes, to be sent to him from Paris, chiefly on politics, on ancient commonwealths, on the history of Egypt, on Bonaparte's campaigns, and on the new system of education, which he hopes to adapt to Arabic literature.

## RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

### I. STATISTICAL VIEW OF DISSENTERS IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

Wishing to make this department of our work as complete as possible, we earnestly beg our correspondents to furnish us with all documents and information relating to it, addressed to the Editors, at the Publisher's. To those who have already obliged us, by communicating valuable materials, we again avail ourselves of the opportunity to return our sincere and grateful acknowledgments: while we cannot but regret, that any of our applications, made in respectful terms, and post paid, should have had to encounter an extraordinary neglect on the part of those to whom they were made. To that circumstance, and to that alone, must be ascribed the absence, in some few instances, of names and dates, with which Dissenting Ministers on the spot, had they been so disposed, could, without difficulty, have furnished us. But, while we have to regret this inconvenience in the prosecution of our monthly labours, we derive great satisfaction from the knowledge, that the materials which are within our reach are truly valuable, and that

our contingent resources are highly respectable. Of this, the interesting accounts which we have already had it in our power to lay before the public, afford, we conceive, abundant proof; and happy should we be, if, by that further aid which we have not failed to solicit, we had been enabled to give a more perfect history of some of the older Independent churches: such, for instance, as Gamlingay and Guyhern, in the present Number.

#### CAMBRIDGESHIRE.

(Continued from page 505.)

**GAMLINGAY.** — It will be seen, by a reference to our Volume i. page 40, that the Baptist church, which was established at Bedford, as early as the reign of Charles the Second, met occasionally at this place, during the persecution — the church at Gamlingay being considered a branch of that at Bedford. Things appear to have continued in this state, till the year 1710, when the former separated from the latter, and was incorporated into a distinct church, consisting of thirty members, who chose Mr. RICHARD FREEMAN their pastor. Under him, the church and congregation appear to have been in prosperity, the latter amounting, in the year 1718, to 250 persons. On the 8th of May, 1733, Mr. Freeman died, in the 69th year of his age. It is supposed that Mr. Dudly, who came here from Cambridge about this time, (see page 316,) supplied the congregation for a short time; but it is stated, that Mr. Freeman was succeeded by Mr. WILLIAM GATES, who was ordained in July, 1734. The church still further increased in his time, till, on the 19th of November, 1749, he was removed from them by death, and they were for some time supplied by neighbouring ministers; for about three years, they were supplied by one Mr. MARCH, who removing to Colchester, Mr. JOSEPH BILLING, a Pædobaptist minister, was ordained their pastor, on the 24th of July, 1755. Mr. Billing continued with them fifteen years; but falling into some improprieties of conduct, utterly inconsistent with his character, as a christian minister, the church dismissed him; and in the year 1772, invited Mr. BENJAMIN MORGAN, then of King's-Stanley, in Gloucestershire, who settled among them. Under him, the church and congregation increased; so that the former appears, in the year 1774, to have consisted of forty-seven members, and the congregation of about 300 persons. He remained with them some years. Upon his removal, they continued for a time destitute, and were supplied by neighbouring ministers, till about 1792, when a Mr. PAYNE, from the church under the Rev. Mr. Edmunds, at Birmingham, settled at Gamlingay, as the pastor of this church. He continued with them about ten years; was, in sentiment, what is com-

monly called highly Calvinistic, but an active man; so that the place of worship was repaired and enlarged by his exertions. After his removal, the church was again destitute for nearly two years, when they called Mr. CAPES, who continued among them for nearly eight years, that is, till the year 1812, when he removed to Loughborough in Leicestershire. After a considerable interval of time, Mr. MANNING was invited to come to Gamlingay on probation, and was ordained pastor, on the 21st of April, 1818. He still continues here. The church and congregation continue as formerly; and it is believed they observe strict communion.

**GRANCHESTER** is a village about two miles distant from Cambridge, into which the late pious and excellent John Berridge, of Everton, in his zeal to extend the *true church of Christ*, introduced the gospel, by preaching in a *barn*. A *sunday-school* was afterwards formed, by the exertions of some of the members of the Independent church, at Cambridge, which continues in a very flourishing state. A school-room was erected a few years since, which will contain about 100 scholars. There is no settled minister, nor regularly organized christian church, but the gospel continues to be preached in the school-room, on the Lord's-day evening, and there is a monthly lecture on a week-day.

**GUYHERN** is a chapeiry, in the parish of Wisbech, St. Mary. "At Guyhern," says Mr. Lyons, (Magna Britannia, vol. ii. p. 291.) "is a meeting-house for the sect called the *Culymites*, from their founder DAVID CULY, who lived at that place in the early part of the last century. Their tenets are nearly the same as those of the disciples of Mr. Whitfield." We presume the Independent church, and congregation, now under the pastoral care of Mr. ISAACS, to be the lineal descendants of these *Culymites*. In a list, dated 1775, published in the appendix to Dyer's Life of Robinson, the Dissenters at Guyhern are set down as *Particular Baptists*, supplied by Mr. R. J. PARKER. We regret, that we have not been furnished with the means of giving a more particular account of this long established congregational church.

**HARSTON** is another Independent church, which owes its existence to the painful and zealous exertions, in the cause of truth, of that excellent man, the Rev. JOHN BERRIDGE, of Everton. Here, as usual, he fitted up a barn, in

which he preached, for the last time, in the year 1781; from that text Luke v. 15. In 1785 the people were formed into a church of the Baptist denomination, of which Mr. JOSEPH HARRISON, who had left Foulmire, not under the most favourable circumstances, (see page 504,) took the oversight, but did not continue long; having, four years afterwards, from what cause we know not, removed out of the neighbourhood, and settled in Yorkshire. He was succeeded by Mr. GEORGE COMPTON, who first came as an occasional supply, but was ordained in May, 1791, and continued with the people, with great acceptance, for twenty-four years; that is, till about the year 1815, when he resigned. After his resignation, Mr. GREENWOOD preached here for some time, and, upon his removal, Mr. STEPHENSON, who came out of Lincolnshire, where he had a school, succeeded him: he has since accepted an invitation to become the stated pastor. A meeting-house has been erected which is capable of seating 400 persons: and there is in connexion with it a good sunday-school.

HADENHAM is another place in which Mr. BERRIDGE first preached the gospel in a barn, about the year 1768. The congregation was afterwards, for many years, supplied by ministers who had been educated at the late Countess of Huntingdon's colleges, till the minds of the people were directed to Mr. OATES, a respectable farmer of Sutton, of the Baptist denomination, who continued to labour among them for fourteen years; but no church order was introduced among them, and in consequence, the congregation began to decline. Upon the discontinuance of Mr. Oates's ministry, a Mr. WILKIN, with others, kept the barn open, and several individuals who desired church-communion, joined themselves to the Baptist church at Cottenham, under Mr. Barron, where they continued to worship occasionally for some time; but, finding the distance inconveniently great, they at length, in the year 1812, formed themselves into a church at Hadenham, Mr. Barron and Mr. Howlett, of Streatham, as ministers of neighbouring Baptist churches, administering the ordinance to them, and Mr. Wilkin, a member of the church, continuing to speak to the people. They have, since the year 1816, elected Mr. PINCHARD, who follows the profession of a surgeon, to be their pastor. Under him, the church, which now consists of fifty members, appears to prosper. A new meeting-house, instead of the barn, has been erected, which was opened in 1817, by Mr.

Harris, and Mr. Edmonds, of Cambridge, and Mr. Sheppard, of Ely.

HASLINGFIELD and HAWKSTON.—At these places, Mr. Robert Robinson, of Cambridge, had congregations of occasional hearers, of which we know nothing further.

ICKLETON.—The Dissenting meeting-house in this place was originally a barn, but has been neatly fitted up for its present use.—It was formerly the property of — Hanchett, Esq. of Criswell Grange; and descended to his daughter, who married — Fuller, Esq. This lady gave it for the service of the dissenting congregation during her life, and, by her will, appropriated it exclusively for the worship of God, to which use it had been applied occasionally, from about the year 1750.—After Mrs. Fuller's decease, the guardian of her son took a rent of twenty shillings per annum for it; but this Mr. Fuller has since returned, as a donation towards repairing the place, and accepts an annual rent of only one shilling, as an acknowledgment that the place is his private property. No Congregational church has yet been formed, nor pastor settled: the preaching is chiefly the gratuitous service of neighbouring ministers. For about two years the worship was continued every Lord's day evening; but for several years Mr. PAYNE has preached a monthly lecture, and more recently, Mr. WILLIAM RICHARDSON, of Barrington. There are also two sermons preached annually on Whitsun Tuesday. Mr. Robert Robinson had a congregation here in the year 1774.

ISLEHAM.—There was an Independent church in this place, in the year 1775, of which the Rev. S. LAMBERT was pastor. There are now two congregations, both of the Baptist denomination, one of which is under Mr. COMPTON. The other supplied occasionally by different persons.

KIRTLING; or, as it is commonly called CATLEGE.—The church and congregation of Dissenters at this place, were first gathered together by Mr. THOMAS ROYSTON, of Burwell, (see page 438) about the year 1725; who preached to them every other Lord's day: Mr. JOHN GIBBONS, an elder of the church at Burwell, preached to them till his death, alternately with Mr. Royston. After that time, they enjoyed the ministry of Mr. Royston solely, on the alternate days till his death, which happened in 1744. He published a funeral sermon for Mr. Godfrey of Isleham, great part of which is in defence of his favourite tenet, the pre-existence of Christ's human soul. His widow sur-

vived him thirty years, and lived at Burwell. Mr. JOSEPH MAULDEN his successor at Burwell, who was ordained November the 4th, 1747, preached also at Kirtling in the same manner as Mr. Royston had done, till the year 1767. During this period, the church at Kirtling communicated, as a branch, with that at Burwell. In 1767, the number of hearers declining at Kirtling, and those at Burwell increasing, Mr. Maulden resigned his charge at the former place to Mr. CARVER, an elder of the church at Southill, in Bedfordshire. The church at Kirtling also separated from Burwell, and its members subscribed a new covenant in the presence of each other, and of Mr. Maulden and other brethren from Burwell, who acknowledged them as a sister church. In 1770, Mr. Carver removed to Wellingborough, in Northamptonshire, and this place was supplied by Mr. MORLEY. In 1774, the church consisted of twenty members. The number of the families who usually attended at this time, was also about twenty; the number of the congregation 100. They are at present supplied by occasional ministers.

LINTON. — Here Measrs. Holcroft and Oddy first formed a congregational church, by preaching to the people in the woods in the neighbourhood, and in the night season. A venerable female, a member of the church at Linton, who died about twenty years since, at the advanced age of ninety-five, received from her mother, that she had in the days of persecution often attended these nocturnal meetings in the woods, when she had heard the venerable men above-mentioned, who may truly be considered as the apostles of this county. In the year 1688, a barn, which stood not far from the spot where the present meeting-house stands, was registered as a place of worship, and continued to be so occupied for about ten years; but it does not clearly appear under whose ministry the people sat. In 1698 a piece of ground was given, and placed in trust, for the purpose of building a meeting-house, which was erected in the same year. At that time a Mr. RAWLINS or RAWLINGS was teacher, but he removed into Huntingdonshire, where it is believed he settled; and Mr. THOMAS WAITE became the first pastor. He had in attendance upon his ministry, in the year 1718, according to Mr. Hussey's account, a congregation of about 350 persons, and appears to have continued pastor of this church for upwards of

thirty years, when he removed to London, and was succeeded by a Mr. KEMP, who remained with them for nearly the same period; at the close of which he was contemplating a removal, in consequence of some disagreement between him and the people, but sudden death prevented that step, and it is hoped removed him to a happier region. He was succeeded by a Mr. ELTINGHAM, who came to Linton in the year 1757, and continued with the church about six years. He was a man much beloved in the town, and a very useful preacher; but entertained some peculiar notions respecting singing, which occasioned an uneasiness between him and the church, in consequence of which he removed to St. Neots.

The church then, in the year 1765, gave an invitation to a Mr. THOMAS CURTIS, who accepted it, and continued pastor till his death, which happened February the 16th, 1783. It is probable that under him the church was on the decline, as in the year 1775 it consisted of only twenty-seven members, and after his decease remained destitute for several years, during which the Socinian heresy made inroads upon it; but by the good providence of God, the persons who were chiefly instrumental in sowing the tares, were removed out of the nation, and the spread of the evil was thus prevented. About the year 1790, the church called Mr. DANDY to take the pastoral office among them, which he did, and after holding it for little more than six years, removed to London. He was succeeded by the present pastor, Mr. THOMAS HOPKINS, who was settled over the church and congregation in the year 1798. At that time the church consisted of only ten members in actual communion, and the congregation was small, but both have increased greatly under Mr. Hopkins. Early in the year 1817, the old meeting-house being found to be in a very unsafe state, it was resolved to erect a new one, the foundation of which was laid on July the 15th of that year, and the building was opened for public worship on the 29th of April, 1818. It is capable of containing about 500 people. There is also connected with the place of worship, a Sunday school of between seventy and eighty children, who are educated gratuitously by the younger part of the congregation. The church is of the Pabobaptist denomination.

(To be continued in our next.)

## II MISCELLANEOUS.

*Account of the Death of the late Lord A.—*  
The following we have received upon the very best authority, and have not ourselves the least doubt of the veracity of the account; although, for obvious reasons, we feel bound to withhold both the names and dates, which are in our possession.

My dear sir,—

As you sometime since expressed a desire that I would furnish you with a written statement of particulars respecting Lord A—'s death, I now embrace an opportunity of doing so, and I the more cheerfully comply with your wishes, because it has been erroneously rumoured that his lordship died in a state of mental derangement.

About two months previous to his lordship's death, I had occasion to be for a considerable part of several days in his lordship's company, though six months before that period he was to me an utter stranger.

On Saturday, the —— of ——, on my being in Wiltshire, and calling on a gentleman who was acquainted with his lordship, he, with much concern, stated to me that his lordship was very ill, that his physician despaired of his life, and that his mind, being greatly agitated at the thoughts of his approaching dissolution, and greatly concerned about his future state, he had, in a paroxysm of despair, said to his steward, "Oh, what will become of my soul when I die!" or words to that effect.

My friend remarked to me, that he much wished some person could have access to him, who might be enabled to afford some suitable relief to his distressed and despairing mind, but he knew not who to apply to that would be acceptably received; and on my remarking, that as I lately had several interviews with his lordship, I should feel no hesitation in waiting on him, my friend particularly requested I would do so; and on my consenting, he instantly ordered his coachman to drive me to his lordship's seat. As it may be desirable to mention every material incident, I must remark, that, as I was advancing towards his lordship's residence, I observed a travelling chariot following the same track, and on my near approach to the house, I requested the servant, who was driving me, to stop; when a footman from behind the chariot alighted, and came to me, and announced the arrival of Lady A—; on whom I instantly attended at her carriage door. She asked me if I were one of the medical attendants, and on my answering in the negative, and inform-

ing her who I was, she, with much concern, inquired, if his lordship was able to see and converse with her; and remarked that she had travelled ever since four in the morning to see him, in consequence of a letter from his physician. I replied, that I could not answer her question, but that I came intending to see him, in hopes of being able to say something that might relieve his distressed mind; but that I should desist if it were at all incompatible with her wishes. Her ladyship, with all possible condescension and politeness, requested I would by all means see his lordship, and say whatever I thought proper to him, and acquaint her with the state of his mind, and ascertain whether he was able to converse with her, adding, that she would wait in her carriage whilst I attended him. Accordingly I entered into the house, and was by the steward introduced to his lordship's bed-room. On my approach to his bed, I found him in much apparent consternation, lying on his bed with his hands uplifted, in a prayerful attitude; but with a countenance that evinced great anguish of mind, mixed with despair. I addressed him as follows: "My Lord, how do you do?" In a contemptuous tone, and with a hasty look, he said, "Who are you?" I gave him my name, and he soon recollects me. I said, "My Lord, you want another physician?"—he said, "No: no;" "Yes, my Lord," said I, "you want a physician for your soul, and I am come to tell you of one who can cure you." "No: no:" said he. "Yes, yes, my Lord," I said. I replied, "there is one who is able and willing to save," &c. He exclaimed violently, and rather outrageously, "No: no:—not me;" and shook his head, and writhed his hands. I raised my voice, and earnestly and emphatically said, "Yes, yes, my Lord, you do; I know your case, and the physician I refer to is just such an one as you need, and none other can cure you." He repeated, "Not me—not me." "Yes—you, my Lord," I again replied; "you think your sins are too great to be pardoned, but if your sins were like mountains piled on mountains to the skies, still the blood of Christ, this mighty physician, cleanseth from all sin." He now fixed his eyes steadfastly on me, listened very attentively, and was less agitated.—I then told him I knew he had been concerned to know what would become of him hereafter:—"The same question," said I, "was put by one mentioned in the word of God, and the answer given there was applicable to your case." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," &c.

Having obtained an attentive hearing, and observing a composure of mind in his lordship, and remembering Lady A—— was waiting my return, I then said, "Would your lordship like to see Lady A—?" And, on his expressing his desire to see her, I attended and stated his lordship's wish, and she went to him: when, from the information I received, an affecting interview took place: at which, with terms of contrition, he lamented his want of conjugal regard, whilst her ladyship, with the tenderest sympathy, afforded the balm of consolation, saying, she came not to accuse, but to console and comfort him. The next morning, Lady A——, being much indisposed, at her request I again waited on his lordship about eleven o'clock, and found him in a very weak state, but quite composed. On my coming to his bed-side, he put his hand to shake mine, which he held for some minutes. I found now no difficulty in entering on the subject of eternal concerns. He was not able to converse much; but his eyes were steadfastly fixed on me; and every word I uttered, he attended to. I saw his dissolution was fast approaching, and repeated what I had before said, or similar thereto. I asked the steward for a Bible, and read a few verses from the second chapter of Mark, and expounded the seventeenth verse, which led me to speak of original sin, of the mystery of redeeming love, and the divine influence of the Spirit: and whilst his lordship was all attention, I said, "Oh! my Lord, only consider how condescending and how kind was the Eternal Son of God, that your misery and mine, and the misery of a sinful world, should so move his compassionate heart, as to bring him down from his glorious abode in heaven, to take our nature upon him, and in that nature to satisfy all the demands of his Heavenly Father's righteous law; whereby justice was satisfied, and the believing sinner saved: for that "there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus," &c. "Now, my Lord," said I, "do you not see your need of just such a Saviour? Can you now, on your dying bed, tell where to find any relief equal to this? Are not these divine realities of infinite importance to your departing spirit? Tell me."—"Oh, yes, yes," said he, and burst into tears: as soon as he ceased, I said, "Oh, my Lord, if these tears are the effect of God's Spirit, who alone can render his word effectual, and lead a poor sinner to Jesus, there is a word of consolation in God's eternal book, 'A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise,'" &c. Here I paused for some time: except an occasional

sentence or two. Nature was giving way, breathing becoming difficult; but whenever I spoke, he attended. I read and expounded the twenty-third Psalm, and afterwards engaged in prayer, in which the attendants joined. Having been in the room about two hours, I now only repeated occasionally a verse or sentence, directing the dying nobleman to look to Jesus. "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out," &c. I afterwards said: "My Lord, could you speak, your language now would be—

"Jesus, lover of my soul,  
Let me to thy bosom fly," &c.

After repeating a verse or two of this hymn, I said, "My Lord, is *He* your only refuge? if so, lift up your hand." He did so. Sometime after I said, "Unto you that believe, he is precious." "Is he not so?"—I think he gave the signal. Shortly after, I said, "O look to Jesus." He gradually grew weaker; and at half-past one, with a placid countenance, breathed his last, as if going to sleep, without a struggle or a groan.

#### *Schools in Ireland.*

THE Committee of the Sunday Schools for Ireland, which have under their care 866 schools, containing 84,174 scholars, have extended their operations to the instruction of adults, and, encouraged by the report of the beneficial effects arising from the instruction of the prisoners in Newgate, schools have been opened in the Antrim and Kildare county gaols, for the instruction of prisoners on a Sunday. The former was established, March, 1818; and though the prisoners were very disorderly before the school was opened, yet, a rule having been made that irregularity of conduct should exclude from the school, the attendance on which is esteemed a privilege, twelve months have elapsed, and not one expulsion has taken place; petty thefts were frequently practised on fellow prisoners, but not one instance has occurred among any belonging to the school.

#### *Religious Tract and Book Society for Ireland.*

A SOCIETY, bearing the above designation, has been formed, under the idea of its becoming a National Association, having for its President, the Right Hon. Viscount Lorton; and for its Vice-Presidents, the Right Hon. Earl of Gosford, Right Hon. Viscount Jocelyn, and Sir Richard Steele. It is similar in its plan to the Religious Tract Society in London, and it has obtained the privilege of free postage for all letters transmitted within Ireland. Its object is to supersede the reading of infamous

and seductive tracts and histories, which, it is well known, have long been in very extensive circulation among the lower classes in Ireland.

*Religious Tract Society.*

SINCE the commencement of the present century, education has spread so rapidly, that nearly all the rising race now possess the ability of reading. The emissaries of darkness, ever ready to pervert the greatest benefits to the worst purposes, have been of late peculiarly active in seducing the poor and the young to the perusal of the most blasphemous infidel publications. These works are sold at a low price; they are written in a style peculiarly suited to the lower classes; and while they profess to be the poor man's friend and counsellor, are most designing and pernicious in their style and tenour. To the unwaried and illiterate, the specious delusions of infidelity are presented in the most deceitful and attractive forms; and those sentiments, which were formerly confined to those who possessed some degree of literary attainments, are now presented to the artisan and peasant, who are the most likely to imbibe the poison, while they are most ignorant of the antidote.

While such measures are in active operation, does it become the friends of religion to be careless and indifferent? As God is pleased to work by means, should not every effort be made to counteract these evil publications, and to expel them by the diffusion of works calculated to show the strength of truth, the value of religion, and the glad tidings of the gospel?

Those especially who have so laudably encouraged the education of the poor, have incurred a responsibility, by inducing an appetite for reading, which it surely is peculiarly incumbent on them to supply with wholesome food. Can any means be better adopted for this purpose, than the diffusion of Religious Tracts? They are plain and inviting as to matter and style, they require only a few moments of leisure to peruse, and may be distributed to a very considerable extent at a comparatively small expense. Impressed with these sentiments, the Committee of the Religious Tract Society, with the greatest earnestness to all who are not totally indifferent to their proceedings, beseech them to come forward and endeavour to stem the torrent of infidelity. May every one, at the present time, be led to make an extraordinary exertion to diffuse Tracts extensively! If any are unable to labour personally, they may present their donation to others who deeply feel the importance of the object.

Subscriptions and communications will be thankfully received by the Treasurer, Joseph Reyner, Esq. 50, Mark Lane; and the Banking-House of Messrs. Hankey and Co.

*Gaelic School Society.*

In the last Report of this Society, is the following account of the deplorable state of ignorance in the Highlands of Scotland. Out of a population of 22,501, belonging to a few parishes, of which returns have been made, 19,367 are incapable of reading either English or Gaelic. Connected with this melancholy fact, it must be observed, that the proportion who are able to read, reside in or near the district where a school is taught; but in the remote glens, or subordinate islands of almost every parish, few or none can be found who know even the letters.

*BRITISH SYSTEM OF EDUCATION.*

*Extract of a Letter from Philadelphia.* WITH us the system is every day gaining friends; it has already exerted the happiest influence upon the morals and conditions of the objects of its care, in some of the sections where the population was most irregular and depraved; and where of course we could not soon expect to witness evidences of reformation, we are rejoiced to discover the most distinguished melioration in the condition of the children, as well as their parents; in short, I shall be greatly disappointed and deceived, if it be not ultimately proved, that the universal education of the indigent is the mean which divine goodness regards with especial favour, as conducing to the welfare of his accountable beings, through the instrumentality whereof, the blessed principles of christianity will be diffused, and rendered permanent in the hearts of mankind. To act the humblest part in so great and good a work, who would not be solicitous?

*Extract of a Letter from Malta.*

I HOPE by the next time I write, I shall be able to inform you, that a School, on the British System, is established at Malta. I have written to the Secretary of the School Society, at Florence, for the lessons which are translated into Italian, without which I should be at a loss. I do not doubt, if subscriptions continue as they have begun, we shall succeed.

The inhabitants of Valetta are anxious, not only for a boys', but likewise for a girls' school, and I can assure you that a girls' school is very much wanted in this city. If one was opened, capable of containing 500 girls, it would soon be filled.

Italy.

THERE are two Schools at Nice; one at Rome, one at Naples, and two at Florence, where a Society is formed for extending the system throughout Tuscany.

*Bible Society in Paris.*

THE establishment of the Bible Society at Paris has been the object of a violent attack, in a periodical journal, by the Abbé La Mensais. He asserts, that the Bible Society is the last effort of an expiring sect. "Bible Societies are Societies of religious anarchy, which lead the way to political anarchy. Have we not, then, Jacobins enough? must we also have Puritans? The audacious Reformers of the christian religion did not themselves know what religion is. Luther did but change the unity of worship into a democracy of opinions."—Such are the modest terms in which this christian priest sends forth an act of accusation against a Society which spreads abroad the christianity of the Gospel in preference to that of the Church of Rome; but it is not by reading, or by reason, that such Catholics qualify themselves for the interpretation of christianity.

This attack of the Abbé La Mensais on the Bible Society, has been admirably repelled in a letter published in the Moniteur, and written by M. Stapfer, formerly Minister of Public Instruction in Switzerland, eminently distinguished by his intellectual endowments, and rare erudition; and no less for that pure and enlarged philanthropy which comprehends so many other virtues, and which is itself the dearest of them all.

*Mision to the Cherokee Indians.*

The Abbé Corica de Sevia, in his tour of the United States, spent a day and a night with the Moravian Missionaries; "Judge of my surprise," said he, "in the midst of this wilderness, to find a botanic garden; not, indeed, like that at Paris, or at Kew; but a botanic garden, containing many exotic medicinal plants; the professor, Mr. Gambold, describing them by their Linnean names. Your Missionaries here," he continued, "taught me more of the nature of promulgating civilization and religion, than all the ponderous volumes which I have read on the subject. I there saw the sons of a Cherokee Regulus learning their lessons, and reading their Testaments, in the morning, and drawing and painting in the afternoon, though, to be sure, in a very Cherokee style; and assisting Mrs. G— in her household work, or Mr. G— in planting corn."

*English Preaching at Calais.*

It may be interesting to persons visiting France to know that a large room has recently been hired at Calais, by several English residents, for the purpose of enjoying the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Palmer. This gentleman, who has recently withdrawn from the church of England, and resigned a valuable living in Ireland, is a calvinistic baptist; but liberal, we are informed, towards christians of other denominations. He is preparing himself to preach in French to those natives who seem anxious to attend upon his ministry.

*Congregational School.*

AT the next General Meeting of the Friends of this Institution, which is fixed for the 27th instant, the Committee have resolved that a ballot shall be taken for the admission of four boys into the school. We are glad to hear that the friendly and important assistance which this Society, in so eminent a degree, has afforded to various pious and excellent ministers, in the education of their sons, will be thus extended to new objects; and we trust that an establishment, founded for the benefit of ministers of the independent denomination, in England and Wales, generally; and which has such claims on the patronage and support of the congregational body at large, will not make its appeal for increased support in vain; but that the growing liberality of the religious public will enable them to augment the number of the pupils to the full capacity of the premises of the institution.

*Account of Supyen, a Young Malabarian Confessor.*

Messrs. Warren and Poor<sup>\*</sup> have entered in their Journal, March 21, 1817, eighteen months ago, an interesting record. "The case," they say, "of Supyen, a young Malabar from Jaffnapatam, of about nineteen years of age, has become very interesting to us. He is the eldest son, the favourite of his parents, who have high expectations respecting him. His father, who is a man of considerable property, placed Supyen under our care, about three months ago, to be instructed in the English language. He committed him to us in a very formal manner; and said, that Supyen was no longer his son, but ours. A few days before, Supyen had visited us, he told us, that, in consequence of reading a few chapters in the Bible which he received from a native christian, he thought that the heathen religion was wrong; and he earnestly desired to be-

\* Missionaries under the American Board.

come acquainted with Christianity. We had much interesting conversation with him, as his mind was awakened to a very serious inquiry. He said that he would request his father to permit him to come to school, to learn English; though his principal object would be to learn the christian religion. His conduct, since he has been with us, has been uniformly good. His modest deportment, and earnest desire to receive instruction, have induced us to encourage him to be much with us. We rejoice in the belief, that he has felt, in some degree, the power of divine truth on his heart. A few weeks ago, when D. Bast, Esq. was with us on a visit, Supyen took him aside, and told him in Tamil, as he (Supyen) understands but little English, that he had something to communicate to us. He was considerably agitated, and manifested a deep interest in what he was about to say. He said he had been examining the christian religion; and, being convinced it was true, he wished to receive it. He learned from the New Testament, that no one could become a true disciple of Christ, unless he forsook father and mother, &c.; and he wished us to know, that he was willing to leave all for Christ. When we explained to him the meaning of those passages, and told him that it was even his duty to continue with his parents, unless they endeavoured to prevent his serving Christ, his mind was somewhat relieved. As his parents were heathens, he appeared to think that he must leave them, without reference to the treatment that he might receive from them. Perhaps, however, he foresaw the storm which has since arisen."

On the 20th of April, his father, hearing that he had become a christian, repaired to Tillipally; and, with fair pretences, took him from the mission family. Scarcely were they out of sight of the missionaries, when Supyen was stripped, degraded, and treated with great abuse. At home, no persuasions or threats, no blandishments or severities, were spared, to induce him to renounce christianity. About a month after he was taken from the mission-house, his former companions gave a feast, which he was obliged to attend. He was solicited by the company to make an offering to one of the gods on the occasion, and was compelled to accept the appointment. He went into the apartment of the temple where the idol was, and was left alone to perform the ceremony. He immediately stripped the idol of his ornaments, and kneeled down and prayed to the living God. When his companions, looking through the curtain, saw him in prayer,

they were afraid, and went and informed his father. Supyen was carried home, and punished with severity. He told his father that "Christ warned his disciples to expect such treatment." Three or four weeks afterwards, "rudely seized by his father and relations, his feet were pinned fast in the stocks, his hands and arms closely bound with cords, and he was severely whipped." His father then brought his christian books, and burned them before him; and compelled him to write a letter of recantation, which was sent to the missionaries. He was kept bound in the stocks for several days, and received but very little to eat.

Still, however, he remained firm in his adherence to christianity; which his parents and friends perceiving, after all other means had been employed in vain to shake him from his steadfastness, he was sent, about the middle of September, to Kandy, in the interior of the island, where, it was supposed, he would be beyond the reach of christian influence. There he stayed about six weeks, conversed freely on religion with some of the Headmen, promised, at their request, to send them the Cingalese New Testament, and returned to his father's house without any signs of apostasy. His sufferings after his return were extreme, until his father, in the fore part of January, resolved on taking him to the coast, that he might live with some of his heathen relations there, where, again, he could have no intercourse with christians. Having proceeded to the place from which they were about to sail, just as they were about to embark, Supyen had the courage to remonstrate;—"You have done many things," said he to his father, "to turn me from the christian religion, but to no purpose. You sent me to Kandy, but I returned a christian. If you now carry me to the coast, I shall return a christian. For as I am a christian in heart, I shall always be one." The father abandoned his purpose. Supyen was sent back to Jaffnapatam; not to go to his father's house, but to beg among the natives, till his father should return from the coast with a husband for his sister; and was told, that, as soon as his sister should be married, he might go wherever he could find support. He was afterwards seen by Mr. Poor; and though desirous of going with him to Tillipally, was advised to remain at Jaffnapatam until his father's return.

No later information has been received of this young Malabarian confessor, of whom it may be devoutly hoped, that he is designed, by sovereign grace, to be an ornament to the christian cause, a blessing to his bewildered country.

men, and a crown of missionary rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus.

*Missionary Intelligence.*

LETTERS have lately been received from the Rev. Mears, Campbell and Philip, dated Cape Town, April 18, 1819.

They have procured a piece of ground, in the centre of Cape Town, very suitable for a chapel. Many of the respectable English inhabitants attend. The congregation consists of from 150 to 200 people.

The most remarkable and gratifying intelligence received by these letters, is the conversion of Africander, a Namaqua, and the account of his visit to Cape Town with Mr. Moffatt, one of the Missionaries who had just returned from a journey through Namaqua Land and Lattakoo, and who brought with him a converted native of the *Damara* country, which is situated far north of the Great Orange River, and a *Boetshuana*, an inhabitant of that country in which Lattakoo is situated.

Concerning Africander, Mr. Campbell writes; "You know when I was here before, he was the Buonaparte of the interior of South Africa. His name carried terror along with it for several hundred miles around his residence. It appears this man was originally in the service of a boor, who sometimes sent him and his sons on commandos, or plundering expeditions, against the defenceless natives of the interior, and furnished them with muskets and powder for that purpose. And having been taught to rob for their master, they resolved to set up for themselves, and ultimately became such a terror to the colony, that one thousand dollars were offered to any man that would shoot him. His appearance excited considerable interest among the inhabitants in Cape Town; and the colonial government was so much pleased with him, that they made him a very handsome present of a waggon, that was purchased at eight hundred rix dollars. And this event will no doubt afford to the government a convincing proof of the happy effect of the gospel, even upon the savage mind, and have a tendency to promote a favourable influence in support of missionary exertions."

Africander is represented to be a judicious, excellent christian; and to conduct himself in an amiable and engaging manner. The persecutor, who burned the missionary station at Warm Bath, is turned into the warm friend of missionaries; the savage has laid aside his barbarous habits, and has become docile and gentle as a child; and the man who was formerly the plunderer and the ter-

ror of the colonists, is now a friend of peace and justice, and is the centre of union, and the bond of harmony, between the subjects of the British government, and the savage tribes with which they are surrounded, and among those tribes themselves. A conversation with Africander is given; and when it is considered, that he never saw a catechism in his life, and that all his information on theological subjects has been derived from a careful perusal of the Holy Scriptures, and the oral instructions of his teacher, his replies are truly astonishing. We give the following as a specimen:—

"Q. Did you not, at first, suppose that you could work out your own salvation without the Spirit's assistance?"

"A. When I saw my duty, I fancied I could perform it. I knew I had served the devil with all my heart, and I thought I had only to change masters, and that I could serve God as perfectly as I had served the devil; but I soon found that I was mistaken. I set to work; but when I made the experiment, I discovered, for the first time, that my heart was full of enmity against God. I tried to change my own heart, but it grew worse and worse; and in my despair, I came to Christ, pleaded his promises, and obtained relief."

"Q. Do you now feel that your heart is perfect?"

"A. No, no, Mynheer, because I feel imperfection in all that I do, in all that I say, in all that I think, and in all my prayers and exercises before God."

Mr. Moffatt appears fully satisfied of the decided piety of Christian Africander and his four sons.

*Homerton Academy.*

(From the last Report.)

FROM a Report of the Visiting Committee, it appears, that the internal state of the Academy is prosperous and encouraging, and that the Students exhibit habits of diligence and attention; so that sanguine hopes may be entertained of their eventually proving themselves to have been actuated by such dispositions and motives as are in unison with the views of their constituents, and will render them, at the close of their academical course, duly prepared to engage in the work of the christian ministry.

Nine young men have been admitted as Students in the course of the past year and the first quarter of this, so that the number now in the house is eighteen, and two more are to be received after the vacation. No Student has finished his studies since the last Report, but Mr. Wright.

With respect to the state of the So-

ciety's finances, it will appear, notwithstanding the exertions of those gentlemen who so generously volunteered their services in the past year, that, from the increased number of Students, together with the inroads that death has made on the List of Subscribers, there is still occasion for the friends of the Institution to use their endeavours to obtain subscriptions or donations in aid of its funds. Of this object, it is earnestly hoped they will never be unmindful.

On the whole, the Committee are of opinion, that there is cause for satisfaction and thankfulness in the present state and prospects of the Society; though imperfection and partial disappointment attend all earthly plans and schemes, there is reason to hope that, by the blessing of God, this Society, and the Institution which it patronizes, will long continue to be honoured instruments in diffusing the knowledge of salvation, and in furnishing a succession of well-qualified pastors for the churches of Christ.

The Students at present in the House promise fair to realize the hopes and expectations of their constituents, and the Society will rejoice to receive under its patronage young men of serious piety and promising talents; who, with an ardent thirst for knowledge, possess ability for the ready acquirement of it; for the attainment of which they will be favoured with very valuable opportunities, under the assiduous care of the present tutors.

*Hoxton Academy.*

(From the last Report.)

FROM Hoxton Academy alone have proceeded between two and three hundred ministers, who are employed every Lord's-day in addressing an average, probably, 100,000 rational and immortal souls. And who can possibly calculate the amount of impression produced, and of actual good effected, in reclaiming from vice, improving the mind and the morals, and augmenting personal, domestic, social, and public virtue? Who can estimate to what extent those great and popular combinations of christian philanthropy, whose object is the illumination of the world, are indebted to our Academical Institutions for supplying that zeal and that liberality, by which they are supported in their mighty projects? Of this, the revelations of the last day alone can make a full disclosure.

The number of applications for admission into the Academy during the last year has been quite unprecedented. About twelve young men are waiting for admission after the midsummer re-

cess. It is the intention to erect ten new studies, by which enlargement, the Institution will be enabled to accommodate forty Students.

Letters from various quarters have been received, containing gratulations on the growing prosperity of the Institution, testimonies to the acceptance and usefulness of the Students, and grateful acknowledgments from parents, for the benefits which their sons have derived from Hoxton. "I am happy," says one, "in congratulating you on the evident advance of piety, as well as of talent, among your important charge." Another, who is a minister, says, "I am increasingly satisfied that my son is called of God to fill the ministerial office, and that he is educated at Hoxton. I am obliged by all the kind attention to his interests. I trust you will have increasing satisfaction from the success of the Institution, arising from the blessing of the great Head of the Church being evidently with you." Another requests the acceptance of twenty pounds, as a small acknowledgment for the benefits his son had received: accompanying the donation, with thanks to the Tutors and the Committee, and with fervent prayers for the prosperity of the Institution.

Among her numerous sons, Hoxton rejoices to acknowledge Dr. Morrison, of Canton, who was admitted in the year 1802, and has since distinguished himself by his successful and zealous labours in China. He has lately given a noble proof of his liberality, with a view to promote the cause of literature and religion in that benighted part of the globe. In a letter of thanks to Dr. Cracknell, of Weymouth, who had interested himself with the University of Glasgow to obtain a diploma for Mr. M. he says, "I have given a thousand pounds to commence an Anglo-Chinese College, at Malacca. Its final object is to evangelize the Indo-Chinese nations. Allow me, in the behalf of the millions of Pagans, to solicit your assistance in fostering this infant Institution." In addition to this princely donation, he engages to subscribe 100*l.* per annum for the first five years.

After the foregoing statement of the growing prosperity and usefulness of this Institution, it would be highly gratifying to the Committee, were they enabled to add, that its income is equal to its expenditure. Here, however, there is a great disparity. From the Report of the Treasurer, it appears, that while the annual expenditure amounts to 2500*l.* the stated income can be estimated at only 1700*l.* leaving about 800*l.* to be supplied by donations, collections, and legacies.

## LITERARY NOTICES.

The Editors will feel obliged to Literary Gentlemen and Publishers, for the communication of Notices (Post Paid) suited to this Department of the CONGREGATIONAL MAGAZINE.

## WORKS PREPARING FOR PUBLICATION.

The Rev. Mr. Bulmer, of Haverfordwest, is preparing for Publication, in one volume, 8vo, "The Vicar of Landover;" or, Light from the Welshman's Candle. In this Poem, the Divine Poems of the Rev. Rees Prichard, the celebrated Vicar of Landover, will be divested of numerous repetitions and defects, peculiar to the age in which they were written; and the most interesting part of that popular book, called "The Welshman's Candle," will be given in a modern dress. The Preface will contain a new and enlarged account of the Vicar, and the whole will be illustrated with copious notes, partly relating to the progress and present state of religion in the Principality.

The seventh Volume of the late Rev. A. Fuller's Works, will be published in a few days. The sixth volume, containing Discourses upon the Apocalypse, is already published.

An Introduction to the writing of Latin: containing easy exercises on all the Declinable, with arranged Lists of the Indeclinable Parts of Speech, adapted to the Etton Latin Grammar. By James Mitchell.

A new and improved Synopsis of Hebrew Grammar, with Points, designed to facilitate the acquisition of that sacred language. By W. Goodhugh.

Juvenile Friendship the Guide to Virtue and Happiness; in Dialogues between two student Friends; one volume, 12mo.

A new Edition of Orton's Life of Dr. Doddridge, 12mo.

A volume of Sermons. By the Rev. John Hyatt.

## SELECT LIST OF WORKS RECENTLY PUBLISHED.

A Sermon, occasioned by the death of Mr. Frederick Smith, of Tower Hill, who was drowned, while bathing in the River Lea: preached at Salters Hall, on Sunday Morning, August 29. By Henry Lacey.

A System of Theology, in a series of Sermons. By the late Timothy Dwight, D.D. L.L.D. President of Yale College, in Connecticut, (America,) with a Life, and fine Portrait of the Author; in five volumes, 8vo.

Christian Missions Vindicated and Encouraged: a Sermon, preached at Queen Street Chapel, Lincoln's Inn Fields, on Wednesday Morning, June 23. By Thomas Edmonds, A.M.

Muse Biblicæ, or the Poetry of the Bible: a Selection of the most elegant Poetical Translations, Paraphrases, and Imitations, of the Sacred Scriptures. 18mo. Price 6s. Boards.

On the State of Scotland, in reference to the Means of Religious Instruction; a Sermon, preached at the opening of the Associate Synod, in Portsburgh Meeting-House, Edinburgh. By John Brown, Minister of the Associate Congregation, Biggar. Price 1s. 6d.

The Hamiltonian Sermon: on the Advantages of the Reformation from Popery. Preached in the Tron Church of Glasgow, June 10, 1819. By the Rev. John Hodgson, M.D. Minister of Blantyre.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

COMMUNICATIONS have been this month received from the Rev. Messrs. Tyerman.—Lacey.—Carver.—Bulmer.—Thornton.—T. H. Horne.—Orme.—Sleight.—Harris. Also from Mr. J. Millar.—Collins.—J. Barnard.—C. Davies.—Epsilon.—G. R.—J. W.—K.—Theologus.—J. W. W.

Sincerus is informed, his paper is not exactly to our mind. Neither of the communications by Musicus can be admitted.

We are requested to state, that, in consequence of the Notice of the Blackburn Independent Academy, inserted in our last, a valuable Donation of Books for the Library of that Institution has been received from an unknown Friend.

\* \* \* Erratum in our last Number.

Page 562, column 1, line 25, for *Boudier* read *Bouclier*.